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The paddock in Dijon

MARC SURER THRASHES THE STARS

The biggest joke about a very unfunny French GP was the fact that not a single journalist voted for Marc Surer in the "fighting spirit" trophy. Instead it went to Hector Rebaque, who only finished one lap behind his team leader Nelson Piquet in a supposedly identical car.

Granted, the Swiss driver's 12th position is not going to get anyone particularly excited. But there is no doubt that Surer's drive was a highlight of this "double" GP, which was his first with the Theodore team. The distinctive white car certainly gave the crowd a thrill every time that Surer braked - always at the last possible moment - at the end of the long pits straight.

When Patrick Tambay left to join Ligier, there were three choices of driver available to Teddy Yip, the owner of the Theodore team. There was Surer (who had been warmly recommended by Tambay himself); Jean-Pierre Jarier (who was thought to have useful friends at Michelin); and Jan Lammers (who is rumoured to have a big sponsorship deal in the offing).

In theory, of course, the possibility of sponsorship should not enter the equation, for Yip has substantial business interests in Macau and elsewhere. In fact, he gives his team a fixed budget which is topped-up with any additional support which can be found elsewhere. Nevertheless, the drive was given to Surer, who couldn't afford to let a chance like that slip by following his eviction from Ensign by Salazar and his South American cash.

In an age when managers seem to be spending most of their time with an eye on what the stock market is doing on Wall Street and elsewhere, it is sad but true to say that momories of Surer's amazing performance on his way to 4th place in the rain at Rio are already beginning to fade away.

The new partnership between Surer and Theodore could not have started at a worse moment, for the reappearance of Goodyear tyres on the Williams and Brabham had forced Michelin to concentrate its development programme on the more competitive teams at the front of the field. It was thus that the Theodore was to be seen on tyres supplied by Avon, the British company which at one stage was expected to save F1 by supplying tyres when no one else would.

In the difficult half-wet showery conditions on Friday morning, Marc was able to demonstrate his abilities to the Theodore people. Using Michelins at that stage, he was given a respectable 7th fastest time which attracted a lot of attention. It was not to last. In the later session, with the track now dry, the faster cars on their quicker tyres came to the fore. Marc was listed on the time sheets in 21st place, 0.03 second slower than Daly's March. Which was the fastest of the three cars on the Avon stet.

Apart from some minor problems, the Avon front tyres were found to be too wide for the requirements of Dijon, producing mammoth oversteer which proved to be most difficult to correct. Despite all the efforts of designer Tony Southgate and his band of followers, there wasn't much that could be done to the car to improve the situation for Saturday, although by Sunday morning Southgate had produced a completely revised list of settings - including different springs - for Marc to try in the warm-up. An electrical fault, alas, brought the car to halt before Marc had been able to check the "feel" of the car: *"it's going to be a gamble for Marc,"* confessed the designer. Teddy Yip, meanwhile, had tried in vain to persuade Goodyear to supply tyres.

For the race, however, the car was indeed much improved. It enabled Marc to give a superb display, for he battled throughout with Patrese, Giacomelli and, ironically, Patrick Tambay in his factory Ligier on its "special" Michelins. The difference between the different makes of tyre was not as pronounced in the race as it had been in practice, and in fact the hard compound Avons might have helped Marc to finish higher if the race hadn't been prematurely halted by the rain. As it was, he finished 12th in the first part (and 1st Avon runner) despite the loss of second gear.

"I think I did what was expected of me," he said at the finish. *"I hope people will remember that I managed to finish in spite of everything..."*

Once again, he had driven safely: he hasn't had a single shunt, off-road excursion or even a spin since the start of the season. When you couple that quality with his unquestioned fighting spirit, he's obviously worthy of a place in a major team.

Villeneuve is already well know. Mansell is making his mark. Will Surer be the next to be properly "discovered"?

M.L.

MANAGER IN SEARCH OF A TEAM

Seen in the Dijon paddock, fighting fit after a week's sunshine in Greece, was the New Zealander Alastair Caldwell. It's 18 years since Alastair arrived in Europe, and throughout that time he has worked for only two racing teams: McLaren until 1979, and Brabham since then.

Alastair started his career as a racing mechanic, but he's always been something more than just a "wrench." His strong opinions and zealous loyalties have not helped him to become the most popular of team employees, and it was revealed at Jarama that he had parted company with Brabham.

With his holiday behind him *("the first time since we came to England that my wife and I have been able to take a proper break")* Alastair is looking for a new position in racing, and was to be seen deep in conversation with several teams.

The ATS team has been suggested as a possible place for him, and it is understood that there might be a position available there. Alastair's enormous fund of technical and administrative experience would be a great asset to the team, However, it is impossible to forecast whether his own brand of forthright honesty would be acceptable to ATS owner Gunter Schmid, himself a candidate for the title of the most volatile personality in Formula 1.

M.S.D.

FIGHTING HECTOR

The first part of the French GP provided a major surprise for several drivers who have had difficulty in accepting Brabham driver Hector Rebaque as a serious competitor. Starting from 15th place on the grid, however, the 25 year old Mexican fought his way into 6th place, overtaking Tambay, Giacomelli, Mansell, Andretti, de Angelis, de Cesaris and Laffite as he did so.

While some of the credit for his speed must go to the soft Goodyears fitted to his car, Rebaque's performance earned him five votes from the journalists on the jury which decides who is to get the Walter Wolf gold medal awarded at each GP to the driver who shows the most fighting spirit.

Hector will receive his award at a ceremony in Silverstone.

M.G.D.

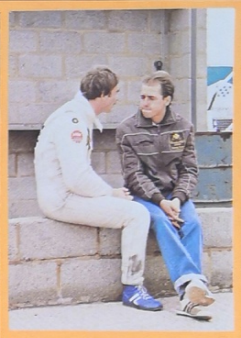
MORENO: LOTUS PROTEGE

Journalists invited to Silverstone for the tyre test sessions which took place there three weeks before the British GP got a surprise at the end of the day. To all intents and purposes, it looked as though Nelson Piquet was doing a few laps in one of the Lotus-JPS 87s! It was not, however, Nelson in the car, though it was his helmet. The Brabham driver had loaned his red and white Bell to his friend and fellow-countryman, 22 year old Roberto Moreno, who had been asked to check out de Angelis' car after the Italian had phoned to say that airline problems prevented him arriving.

Moreno signed a "test contract" with Lotus earlier this year, after showing virtually unbeatable form in the tough school of British Formula Ford racing throughout 1980. Despite having only enough sponsorship money for food and lodging, he has now been given a free place in the F3 Ralt-Toyota raced earlier in the season by Dutchman Michael Bleekemolen.

It is going to be several months, however, before Moreno even qualifies for an F1 "super licence," because at the time of the Silverstone tests he had only started three F3 races. Nevertheless, it looks as though Colin Chapman has another star on his hands. For only five days before the F1 test, young Roberto had convincingly won his third-ever F3 race, beating Euro-series leader Mauro Baldi in the Silverstone international championship round.

M.G.D.



PORSCHE: F1 RUMOURS...

Not for the first time, there are rumours that Porsche may soon be back in F1 after a 16 year break. With their sports cars now getting old-fashioned, and their Indy project shelved by a last-minute rule change, it is understandable that the engineers in Stuttgart should be taking a close look at alternative forms of racing.

No official confirmation is forthcoming. However, GPI correspondents in Germany quote Porsche's Managing Director, Dr Peter W Schutz, as having said that there is *"an 80 per cent chance"* of an appearance in F1 as soon as 1982.

E.B.

THE PATRICK DEPAILLER TROPHY

In memory of the late Patrick Depailler (killed in testing at Hockenheim last year), his family has decided to award a trophy which will be presented annually to the man who qualifies for pole position in the French GP.

The first winner was René Arnoux, who is pictured here receiving the award from Patrick's mother.

X.C.

DIJON

When a marshal grabs you by the sleeve and and has you hustled unceremoniously out of the pits by three security guards, even when your credential is clearly visible, there is a natural temptation to get the hell out of the circuit and find a quiet corner where you can concentrate on the tennis from Wimbledon. During the final timed practice session at Dijon, that is exactly what happened to me.

Something even more amazing happened to GPI contributor Mike Doodson, who was quietly working in the Press room on Sunday morning, after the warm-up, when he suddenly found himself surrounded by Formula 1 drivers. Had they decided to be helpful, for once, and come to talk to him instead of vice versa? Not at all. The organisers had decided to kick out the journalists and use the facilities for the pre-race briefing! Mike removed is ear plugs (Dijon has the world's noisiest press room) and vowed that he would invade the drivers' motorhomes when they were looking for a quiet place to get their work done.

The production car race was scheduled to start at 9 o'clock on Sunday morning, with well-known names competing like ex-F1 man Beltoise, Le Mans winner Jaussaud, and rallymen Fréquelin and Darniche. As a result of the traffic snarl-ups on the only road into the circuit, however, Beltoise and Darniche arrived late. Beltoise just managed to get on the grid in time, but an embarrassed Darniche had to start at the back.

Alan Jones, normally a proponent of doing things exactly right, was disgusted by the prisonlike atmosphere which hung over Dijon-Prénois, and it was entirely his idea to devote his column (on page 52) to his reactions. A dog was allowed to jump at Alan on Sunday. He normally likes dogs. But not when they've been trained to bite, even if they are muzzled.

Next year we will be going to the French GP at the Paul Ricard circuit. It will be with pleasure, because Formula 1 is an activity which should be enjoyable and spectacular. On the Mediterranean shore we look forward to finding sunshine, sea, reasonable circuit access... and no dogs. I sincerely hope that we'll be going to Ricard in two years' time as well. The agreement to alternate the race between the two circuits must be cancelled... right away.

Eric BHAT

The paddock in Dijon

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE FLAT 12

British journalist Alan Henry, whose book on Ronnie Peterson is still a motor racing best-seller, has just published a new volume, this time on the history - in F1 and sports car racing - of the 3-litre Ferrari flat-12 engine.
Written with the full co-operation of Ferrari and of the many drivers who raced flat-12 Ferraris between 1969 and 1980, the book is copiously illustrated.
Available only in English, "FLAT-12" is published by Motor Racing Publications Ltd at 8.95.

M.G.D.

NOT FORGOTTEN...

For Formula 1, the most painful legacy now of the great 80/81 political battle between the international federation and the British constructors is a set of laughable rules.
But the laugh appears to have turned on motor racing, as a British team manager found when he took his family to a big air show in Surrey. On sale in one of the booths were tee shirts bearing an intriguing anagram.
It said, simply: "FISA + FOCA = FIASCO." Who are we to disagree?

M.G.D.

THE ZOLDER ROW ROLLS ON

There was no mistaking the annoyance on Riccardo Patrese's face when he arrived at Dijon. He had only just been told that both Villeneuve and Pironi had paid the 5000 dollar fines demanded by FISA from 12 drivers for their part in the startline demonstration at Zolder.
"I'm really disappointed by the GPDA's attitude," he said, *"and I'm very angry with the drivers who paid up so meekly. What's the point of making a demonstration if you don't show that your mean it by following it through?"*
Even Siegfried Stohr, Riccardo's team mate, had coughed up. *"He phoned Scheckter for advice. It was Jody who said he ought to settle up."*
Jody had the difficult job of calming down the militants when eventually he arrived. After a long GPDA meeting, Scheckter said that the unity of the GPDA members had been the most important consideration, although it's worth remembering that only 12 drivers joined the Zolder "demo". As Scheckter pointed out, however, *"with most of the teams paying the fines on behalf of their drivers, the best thing was for everyone to do the same thing."*
The drivers' meeting appointed four GPDA members who were delegated to meet FISA President Balestre. They have been given a promise that the question of the fines will be reconsidered, and afterwards they a communique which stated that *"FISA accepts that the sanctions imposed (after Zolder) should not be interpreted as casting blame on the drivers for the accidents which later took place during the Belgian GP."*
The drivers have now made a formal request to FISA for stronger representation on the various commissions of the federal body. An undertaking has been extracted from President Balestre for what is to be a "rapid result" to the GPDA demands. The deadline is July 17 (ie the Friday before the British GP), by which time it is hoped that a satisfactory answer will have been received.

ALAIN PROST IS "MR CLEAN"

There wasn't much originality in the choice of drivers selected by a small jury of journalists whose task it was at Dijon to select the driver who had the "cleanest" (sic) race.
In fact, their overall classification reflected the race result, with Prost taking 40 points ahead of Watson (29), Piquet (27) and Arnoux (5).
In the overall standings for the trophy, which is sponsored by the Italian Candy washing machine company, the "cleanest" drivers are Gilles Villeneuve, Carlos Reutemann, Jacques Laffite and Alain Prost.

X.C.

JARIER THE WALLFLOWER

Even though he had no drive in French Grand Prix, Jean-Pierre Jarier was wandering around the Dijon paddock. He was upset not to have been offered the Talbot-Ligier drive, for he thought the team might have considered him first when Jabouille retired. After all, Jarier stepped in as first reserve at the start of the season when Jabouille wasn't fit; might he not have been given a second chance?
"At Long Beach and in Brazil, I drove two good races, even though the team wasn't totally competitive. I drove to team orders, letting Laffite by into sixth place in Brazil when I could have scored a world championship point. I left the team on good terms. Now I'm extremely disappointed."
According to Jarier, Laffite recommended Tambay as second driver at his expense, although this is more theory than fact. But this is ill-founded, as Guy Ligier has never been influenced by Laffite in his choice of second driver, except when Jabouille was recommended.
Nevertheless, Jarier still hopes to make his third comeback. *"I'm still a racing driver, and as determined as ever. That's why I'm here. I'm making contacts. Anyway, I want to drive for a top team, in a competitive car."* Maybe that's why he declined the offer of the Theodore drive. Even so, it was a very good starting point for Tambay's second comeback.

E.B.

GUY LIGIER: "REASONS OF STATE"

Why was Guy Ligier missing on race day at Dijon? It was not because he was disappointed with the comparatively poor showing of his two cars in qualifying, nor was it because the French team owner wanted to save on the travel budget.
In fact, if the rumours are to be believed, the Vichy-based constructor and businessman was visiting an old friend for dinner. It is understood that he was seeing France's new Socialist President François Mitterand, whose election campaign he had publicly supported.
It is not known if the two watched the race on TV (if so, they won't have seen much of Guy's two cars). But they would certainly have had an opportunity to examine the publicity opportunities which racing offers, in this case to the nationalised Renault team.

E.B.

DAVE LUCKETT IS BACK

As anticipated in the Jarama issue of GPI, Arrows' Chief Mechanic Dave Luckett - the man who was hurt in the terrifying start line incident at Zolder - was back at work with his team at Dijon.

Although neither of the Arrows drivers was able to show much speed in the French GP, Luckett was clearly delighted to be back in F1. We were equally pleased to see him at work again with nothing worse than a limp as a reminder of what could have been a much more serious injury.

E.B

BRAVO, JEFF

Jeff? That's not the name of a Grand Prix driver! No, we know that, but we offer our heartiest congratulations to the King of Freelance journalists, Jeff Hutchinson, for an excellent second place on handicap in the Le Mans of air races: Paris-New York-Paris.

E.B.

GOODYEAR: "THE CUSTOMERS INSISTED"

There was only one reason why Goodyear agreed to return to Grand Prix racing, and that was because the Brabham and Williams teams specifically requested it. This was the most important point which was to be gleaned at the special press conferance called at Dijon by Leo Mehl, the respected Director for Racing of the American company.
Nevertheless, we find it difficult to believe that other factors - notably the publicity value of motorsport which Goodyear lost to its European rivals by withdrawing last December - played a major part in the decision. As Mehl himself admitted, with only 10 days between the decision to return and the first day of qualifying for the French GP, there was hardly time to have suitable tyres (only four compounds at Dijon) prepared. It was a move which certainly took Michelin by surprise...
Ironically, however, the lack of suitable soft tyres for the second part of the interrupted race was eventually to cost Nelson Piquet what had seemed to be a certain victory.

E.B.

YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE HEART...

Didier Pironi was on the wire for the Monaco Grand Prix, one of the toughest on the calendar. The wires led from his chest to a little device which recorded his heartbeats throughout the race. The results were available at Dijon, and amateur heart surgeons might like to take a note of the findings.
Before the race, Didier's heart was turning over at 60 "rpm." At the start, he was revving at 144, and for the 90 minute long race, he was between 180 and 200, with peak heartbeats reaching between 204 and 207 when passing other cars. At the finish Didier was ticking over at a steady 178 rpm.
Doctors Jean-Paul Richalet and Catherine Bertrand had carried out the tests, and they had some interesting comments. *"I'm really amazed,"* said Dr Richalet. *"I've never recorded such a high pulse rate for such a long time. I've seen similar peaks in ski races and in athletics, but then the effort is for a much shorter period of time."*
As a typical professional, Didier was interested in the findings of this research exercise, because it could well influence his physical training in the future.

The editorial team of Grand Prix International chose an appropriately French car for their trip to Dijon and the French GP. It was this Citroën CX Reflex, a model which combines the traditional comfort of the CX with the economy of the latest range of 2-litre engines.

What could be better than a win at home for the Renault team, and for Alain Prost to win his first Grand Prix on home ground? The Renault team emerged from the doldrums at Dijon

RENAULT: SINGING IN THE RAIN

René Arnoux: pole position as a 33rd birthday present, followed by fourth place, which didn't entirely please him

Two years ago, the Renault team had gone through a bad time until Jabouille won the French Grand Prix at Dijon. He was backed up by René Arnoux's third place after that famous duel with Villeneuve during the closing laps. Since then, Renault has slipped back into the doldrums. Things haven't gone well this year, but Alain Prost made up for recent races by winning this year's French Grand Prix at Dijon, with Arnoux finishing fourth. As in 1979, the Renault team was very relieved that the bad patch had come to an end.

by Eric BHAT

Bernard Cannonier used to have the responsible and important job of cooking for the Renault team at circuits. He retired at the beginning of the year, but went to Dijon to see how his old friends were getting on. At the end of the race, he stood rigidly to attention in front of the pits while the Marseillaise flooded from the loud-speakers. As he turned towards the rostrum, as a Moslen might turn to Mecca, there were tears in his eyes. He'd lived through all the ups and downs of his team and happily enough, he was there to see his old friends enjoy their moment of glory.

Everyone in the Renault team was pleased to hear the French National anthem played for them. After a season of problems and a distinct lack of results, their patience was beginning to turn into genuine anxiety.

Since the start of the season, it had seemed that the team had picked up some sort of gremlin. The team's cars had the utmost difficulty in getting through the first few laps unharmed. The list of incidents this year in which Prost and Arnoux have been involved is long, tiresome and depressing. One can have a run of good luck, just as one can suffer a run of bad luck. There often seems nothing that one can do about it. And when luck changes sides, then things can improve quite suddenly beyond all expectations. A team can employ as much technology as it likes, and be as professional as it possibly can be, yet there is always the wild card of luck, the unpredictable and the unknown elements.

Gérard Larrousse, the director of Renault Sport, was getting fed up with this run of bad luck, and from time to time, it was

clear that it was getting him down. After neither of his cars had featured in the Monaco Grand Prix, the normally calm Larrousse was on the verge of losing his temper. *"It's infuriating. Once again both our cars were hit on the first lap. This is getting to be the limit."*

Incidents during racing haven't been the only reason why Renault has had such a depressing and disappointing start to the season. There have been other reasons, most important of which was adhering to the spirit of the Concorde agreement. The RE20s which they used at the start of the season before the RE30s were ready, weren't as competitive as they'd hoped. The team was slow to react to the use of hydro-pneumatic suspension, much to the astonishment of the British-based teams. But Renault's aim was to be honest. If skirts were banned, why promptly try to replace them?

Even the introduction of the new RE30 was to some extent considered a handicap. *"It's very difficult to start developing a new car halfway through the season,"* says Larrousse. Prost said after the race that even though a lot of work had been done on the car - obviously - there was still more to do. It was scarcely a competitive car in Belgium and at Monaco, but had made some progress by Spain.

At the beginning of the year, the Renault team stated its intention of winning the World Championship. The record up to Dijon revealed that the team's best result was Prost's third place in Argentina, scarcely a World Championship-winning performance.

This failure to score decent results was made even worse when Ferrari were immediately quick, using turbocharged engines like Renault, and won two races. These wins may have been lucky but deserved, but they were to Renault's discredit. Ferrari, after all, had only been racing the turbo for three months, yet the team won two races running on circuits which weren't meant to favour the cars or engine. What were Renault doing about it?

The Renault team continued to develop the cars, trying to ignore the doubters and remaining confident, if not totally calm. Progress was made Jarama. *"We could win this race, the car's very promising,"* said Larrousse, but it was not to be

When I arrived at Dijon, Prost greeted mewith these words, *"don't worry about working, I know who's going to win here on Sunday."* Was this just boasting? Renault had tested the RE30s quite considerably at Dijon before the French GP and had done a lot of work on the aerodynamics.

"We need a good result", confided Gérard Larrousse. *"We've done a lot of work on the cars in preparing for this Grand Prix. That's not just because it's the French GP, we would have done the same for say the Guatemala GP."*

On Friday afternoon, the two Renaults had set the quickest times just before a rain shower dampened the track. The weekend had started well. The team had thrown off its jinx. While the track was drying and nearly all the cars were in the pits, Gilles Villeneuve strolled over from the neighbouring Ferrari pit and with his usual mischievous grin asked, *"have you been using all the revs?"*

But in the second half of practice, John Watson set a faster time in his Marlboro MP4 than the yellow and black cars. René Arnoux had his revenge the next day in the second qualifying session. His car was handling ideally. René was determined to show its worth, and he set pole time. He was optimistic. He knew he had the car with which to win.

On the other hand Alain Prost wasn't so happy. It was unlike him to be dejected rather than confident. He was no longer optimistic. He didn't know why but his car suffered understeer, and whatever the team tried, the mechanics failed to cure it. *"It just won't turn in,"* Alain kept repeating. He churned over the problem in his head, again and again. After the team's briefing on Saturday afternoon, Alain found himself with Bernard Dudot. *"Well, have you got the key to success?"* asked Alain like a child looking for a toy. *"Don't worry, we'll find out what's wrong,"* replied the designer, affectionately tapping his driver on the head.

And they found the key to success. During the warm-up, Alain was still depressed. The car still understeered. But before the race, the team found "something" which they didn't want to reveal. Alain was smiling again. He knew his car would be alright for the race.

René lost all the benefits of pole position when the starting lights failed to come on in their normal order. He made a slow start and dropped back in the field. Alain, on the other hand, made a good start and was always amongst the front runners, lying second after a couple of laps. But then both drivers lost fourth gear. When the race was stopped because of more rain, Alain was in second place and Arnoux was fifth. *"I thought we'd lost the race then,"* said Larrousse. Piquet's tyres had gone off, and he might have been overtaken had the race continued, but now he could fit fresh tyres. The same was true of Reutemann, in fourth place, just in front of Arnoux. It looked to Larrousse that a Renault wasn't going to win the race, even though the drivers had been in such strong positions.

But in fact the opposite happened, and Larrousse couldn't believe his eyes. The mechanics fitted softer tyres to the cars for the second, 22 lap race, and turned up the turbo boost slightly. Prost's rev limit was raised so that the engine would rev more, making up for his loss of fourth gear. The team took the gear box apart, but were unable to replace anything, yet on his second warm-up lap, when Prost tried to get fourth, he engaged it. *"It was as though God himself had something to do with it,"* he told us later. *"That thrilled me, I was really excited and very determined. I was really ready to win."*

He made a superb start and went straight into the lead, and there he stayed until the chequered flag signalled the end of the race. He had been seven seconds behind Piquet at the end of the first part. It took him four laps to make up that much on Piquet in the second, and then he pulled away even further. He raised both arms as he crossed the finishing line, just as François Cevert used to. Everyone sighed with relief in the Renault team. Just as at Dijon two years ago, the team had established its cars as a front runners. □

If looks could kill: determination or cunning? Alain Prost lacks neither

AMBITION UNREALISED

After the Spanish Grand Prix, Jean-Pierre Jabouille gave in to the considerable pressure on him and announced his retirement as a racing driver. Every driver accepts the dangers and responsibilities of Grand Prix racing, but Jabouille was subjected to more than that. He suffered from an unhealthy sense of insecurity, similar to that felt by any driver trying to make a comeback after serious injury. His ability was being questioned. A driver recovering from a bad accident wants to make his return in a quiet and secure atmosphere, but that is rarely the case.

Everyone wonders if he still has the determination and ability to drive at ten tenths, even though they may sympathise with the driver for the suffering he's been through. So to any physical injuries is added psychological damage which is only cured by time... or retirement.

Ever since Jabouille left his hospital bed, he has been under pressure. His return to the track has been more akin to the road to Calvary. *"It's been the worst four months of my life, I've suffered much more since I left hospital than the physical pain endured during the two months immediately after my accident in Canada."*

Jabouille has had to face up to the one thing that every Formula 1 driver dreads: the fact that he can no longer drive a Formula 1 car at its limit. So now he's quit the cockpit. His patience and determination, well-proven throughout his career, have been stretched to the limit. Outside pressures have forced him into the decision that he will no longer drive Grand Prix cars for a living. At least he's now rid himself of that pressure.

This decision was inevitable in some ways. Could it ever have turned out otherwise, despite his courage, considerable efforts to get fit, and fierce determination to make a comeback? Long months of recuperation haven't been a total success. When he failed to qualify at Monaco, it was obvious to Jean-Pierre that his career was threatened. Oddly enough, it was the pole position set at Jarama by his good friend, brother-in-law and teammate, Jacques Laffite, which contributed to the final denouement. Jabouille was a lot slower, too slow for it to be ignored.

But at Jarama, Jabouille was badly demoralised. *"I was at my lowest ebb during practice. I could feel that everyone was talking behind my back. I could have set a better time - I proved that during the race - if I hadn't felt this backbiting."*

Such doubt and suspicion have no place in a sport as highly developed as Grand Prix racing. The drivers are the best, that's why they're in Formula 1, but they need constant morale-boosting to feel confident that they can beat the rest of the world's best. A driver who is unsure of himself no longer thinks and performs as a top driver.

Jean-Pierre's insecurity was deep-seated by the time Jarama was over. He went home and analysed his position within the sport. *"I made my final decision on the Tuesday or Wednesday after Spain. I went to see the team to renogotiate my terms of employment. I just hoped that maybe there might be another way to solve... perhaps something might change... they might have offered something... but in the end it was obvious that nothing could be done. It was all over."* Jabouille stuttered over some of the phrases as he told the story, embarrassed that he nurtured a secret hope that a miracle might save his driving career from the brink of such an ignominious conclusion. A fifteen year old ambition and a competitive spirit can't be erased in a single day. But at such a high level of motor racing, a driver's mind has to be confident that the rest of the body is perfectly reliable and capable of taking the stresses and strains exerted on it. Jabouille had to admit that his legs weren't perfect. He took the only road open to him, and on the Wednesday afternoon, he quit the job of driving racing cars.

The story of how this came about is easily told. At Montreal in 1980, Jabouille's Renault suddenly snapped off line in a corner and slammed head on into a barrier, badly injuring the driver's legs. He spent months trying to regain full use of his legs, at the same time warding off doubts as to his ability. He succeeded in neither.

But Jean-Pierre is a thinking man and a realist. He admitted his handicap and took the vital decision, despite his personal reticence. He was clearly upset as he gave the reasons for his retirement. *"I decided to retire because I'm a fatalist and this is the work of destiny. I'm now physically handicapped. Last year I used to start races from the front rows of the grid, and now I'm at the back. I know that things aren't going to improve, my right leg is losing me tenths of a second every lap. I could remain a Formula 1 driver, but I could never be as competitive as I was before. The fact that I knew I wasn't as able as I was would mean that my enthusiasm and determination would be reduced. And finally, there's the public image. People don't like to see a racing driver hobbling to his car."* The truth hurts. Jabouille is straightforward, embrassingly cruel in what he says, but he's right.

"I realised that there was no point in taking any more risks. I couldn't get good results, and I felt that the atmosphere was deplorable."

Any physical suffering was made worse by bitter comments about his injuries. Jean-Pierre feels resentment bordering on downright anger towards those who have made comments as he's hobbled by. They've all increased the pressure and doubts about his ability. *"It began when I first began to race again. I knew what was going on. People would point at me when I walked past. You have to be maimed or handicapped to realise what it's like. When you're accustomed to being fit and playing a lot of sport, then it's a psychological disaster when you can scarcely walk down the stairs. But it's made even worse when you're looked on as some sort of freak."*

For a while, he managed to shut himself away from the pressure, but as the comments increased, so did the doubts about his ability. Finally, he could bear it no longer. It's not the first time that people have made comments behind his back. Last year, for instance, when the clutch kept breaking on the start-line, he was blamed for their breakages. His ears must have been burning, but he ignored the comments and sorted out the problem. *"But you must realise that at that time, I was physically strong, and felt morally indestructible,"* he says today.

Jean-Pierre feels bitterness for those who made adverse comments, particularly the press, but on the other hand, he praises Guy Ligier for his attitude. Ligier told him to make up his own mind, suggesting that Jabouille was sensible enough to make the right and logical decision. *"Guy was also under pressure. He had sponsors and the team's racing associates on his back, and he didn't want to disappoint them. That's quite understandable. Formula 1 is a professional sport, and everyone is in it for a good reason. You expects results when you're paying so much for them, you can't afford passengers at that price. The team personnel were handicapped which couldn't have been very satisfying, but they were very good. However, I can't say that about everyone."*

Now Jabouille has moved on to another stage is in his career. He's now technical adviser to the Ligier team. He would have liked to have taken a six month break to get over his disappointment, and *"then make a comeback"*. But even though his new contract has its advantages, it does stipulate that he starts work immediately. *"My job is almost the same as it was before. I go to races and test sessions. The only difference is that I don't drive."*

It's a sad end to the driving career of man who so much wanted to be World Champion. *"I missed out last year,"* he comments. But there are many people close to him who are just as disappointed, not the least of whom is Jacques Laffite. At the beginning of this year, Laffite was delighted. *"I'm glad Jean-Pierre has joined the team, because now we can work together with a common aim. We've wanted to do this for some time."* But as things have turned out, this partnership between the two brothers-in-law has failed to reach fruition - at least on the track. Instead, Jean-Pierre says that *"now I'm no longer driving, it's the one thing that makes me want to go racing. I'm still very determined for Jacques. I'm going to do all I can to help him get the best results possible."*

E.B.

PIRONI'S TALE OF TWO RACES

Ever since the start of the season at Long Beach, the Ferraris have been at their best on the circuits which require hard braking and acceleration *ie* the ones where the powerful turbocharged V6 engine can be used to the full. On the other hand, the woeful handling of the 126C chassis has been an obvious handicap on the quicker corners. And the Dijon circuit has lots of fast curves.

"We didn't expect the cars to be particularly brilliant here," admitted French Ferrari driver Didier Pironi. *"We're well aware that we've got a handling problem with the cars, and it was not improved by having to use hard compound tyres in order to last for the full race distance. The engine in my car was also running badly: there was a dreadful flat spot every time I accelerated, and the power came in so suddenly that I was getting wheelspin. It's not surprising that the tyres went off after a few laps of the first part."* No wonder, therefore, that Pironi could do no better than an undistinguished 9th in the first part of the rain-interruped race.

It was to be a very different second part, however, at least as far as the Frenchman was concerned. His mechanics made themselves busy putting his car right in the interval while he had a long think about the situation. *"You have to be in a different state of mind when you're preparing for a 22 lap sprint,"* he confessed. *"We made a few alterations to the car: a bit more boost... a set of qualifiers... and a bit more rear wing for extra downforce in the corners."*

The changes meant that the Ferr. would be a much quicker car in the dam conditions which prevailed after the restart. *"I like it when the track's a bit damp... it meant that I was able to make up a few places for the first half dozen laps or so. But then I backed off, because I knew that I had to keep my tyres in good shape if I was going to hold my place all the way to the finish."*

In fact, Pironi lay 4th virtually through ut the 22 laps of the second part of the ra e, fighting off a challenge from a determ - ned Nelson Piquet. The Brazilian ha some distinctly critical things to sa about the behaviour of the Ferrari driver whose tactics prevented him from setting off in pursuit of Prost.

Tongue in cheek, perhaps, Pironi dismissed suggestions that he had deliberately blocked the Brazilian. *"On the slowing down lap he pulled up alongside and made a few signs. I'm sure he must have been congratulating me..."* With a grin, he added: *"after all, it's a well known fact this year that the Ferraris have not been particularly easy to overtake..."*

E.B.

FRENCH RAIN DAMPENS BRAZILIAN PROMISE

No one who saw the TV coverage of the French GP will quickly forget the expression of despair on the face of Nelson Piquet as he waited for the race to re-start. To the surprise even of the Braham men themselves, Nelson had comfortably outdistanced everyone at the start of the race, striding away from Prost's Renault at the rate of a second per lap, and slowing only when he came up to lap backmarkers.

Nelson's disappointment was understandable. If the rain had held off for only two more laps, the race would have been halted at 60 laps, 75 per cent of the allotted full race distance, and he would have been declared the winner without having to go through the agony of a restart.

With no soft tyres yet available from Goodyear, and having to rely on the non-adjustable boost pressure provided by the atmosphere, Nelson knew that his chances of a win had suddenly shortened. *"There's no ethics in motor racing,"* he said to a Brazilian journalist. *"Nelson was upset, of course,"* explained Brabham designer Gordon Murray. *"The adrenalin was flowing for him because he had been leading the race. To see it stopped like that was a big anti-climax, and it's asking a lot to get up to that pitch all over again in the same afternoon."*

At the restart, Nelson was outdragged by both Renaults and Watson's McLaren. On the second lap he was passed by Pironi's very powerful Ferrari, which proved impossible to overtake on the straight. In the aggregate result, instead of the win that had been within his grasp, he had to be content with 3rd place behind Prost and Watson on their soft tyres. Four points hardly seems a just reward for all the effort that he and the team had put into this race.

But while Nelson, anxious to get home to Monte Carlo, edged his big black Mercedes into the traffic jams, his team weighed up their chances. *"We thought that we would be lucky to get fifth place behind the turbos here,"* said Murray. *"Fortunately, it looks as though the development programme we did in readiness for the five high speed circuits coming up in the calendar has paid off. In its way, this race has been extremely encouraging for us."*

M.G.D.

"FISA COPPED OUT" - MARIO

Mario Andretti, that most popular of world champions, is always ready to speak up when he sees an injustice being committed in his sport. And he doesn't pull any punches in his condemnation of FISA for singkling out 12 drivers with swingeing 5000 dollar fines for their part in the start-line demonstration at Zolder that preceded the much-publicised accident before the Belgian GP.

"Why impose the fines on us?" demanded Andretti at Dijon. *"FISA cited safety. Did we create the unsafe situation? We didn't. That's why I resent so much that they had to single out the drivers. It's convenient (for FISA) to say "You must pay the fine," it's easy, because we're licensed. It's a real cop-out for those bastards."*

But if FISA ears were burning at Mario's remarks, certain constructors will be feeling even more uncomfortable about the comments that he fired at them about the Zolder confusion.

"A lot of mistakes were made (on the grid), not only by us, the drivers, but also by certain people like Mr Chapman, Mr Ecclestone and Mr Williams for making their drivers and mechanics start their cars at a time where other drivers were not even in their cars. To me, what they did was criminal."

The former champion underlined his personal position. *"I don't support the limiting of the number of cars allowed to practise. And I didn't support the timing of the mechanics' demonstration, not only from the standpoint of disrupting the programme but also because it upset my own concentration. But the mechanics had their minds made up, out of respect for their fellow who died. Anyway, I believe in suporting the mechanics... and when they walked away, although I was in my car, I had still not been buckled up. You need a mechanic to do that for you..."*

The F1 constructors have six votes on the F1 Commission, the drivers none (although they are allotted one representative). *"Are the drivers as a group to be disregarded that much? These goddam constructors: who do they cite when they're trying to sell a goddam sponsorship? Colin Chapman alone? No, there's alwas some "name," a driver, up front. And when they're ready to trash us, they throw us in a corner. I resent the constructors' moves to keep us disorganised, and I support the demands for the drivers to be represented, and to have at least one vote."*

Who should represent the drivers, therefore? *"I've been asked,"* says Mario, *"unfortunately I'm not capable of doing it because of where I live and because I don't have the time. Villeneuve is a bit too young: he's prone to making mistakes in this area, and he misrepresented us before the FISA by saying the Zolder business was a strike, which it wasn't. But Scheckter can look after it. He works out very well. I support him... he's come a long way in knowing how to approach certain things."*

M.G.D.

THE FILM OF THE RACE

It was, of course, two races. The first lasted 58 laps before a sudden shower dampened the track and it was stopped. The second lasted 22 laps, making up the total of 80 laps, the original distance. Piquet won the first in front of Prost and Watson. But the Renault driver quickly took the lead at the start of the second, and although he was closely followed by Watson, he was the winner overall, while Piquet dropped to third.

1 →

1 - Watson and Arnoux duelled for pole position. Watson was quicker in the first official session, but Arnoux was quicker in the second.

2 →

2 - The start: Arnoux is completely left behind. Piquet, hidden behind Watson, makes a superb start and takes the lead.

3 →

3 - Piquet leads from Watson on lap one. De Cesaris tries to take third place from Prost.

4 →

4 - Behind the leader's Brabham, Prost overtakes Watson, who waits to pass the Renault driver.

5 →

5 - Further back, Arnoux has climbed up through the field from eighth place. Here he overtakes fourth-placed Reutemann.

6 →

6 - The race was stopped by a sudden shower. The drivers restarted in the order the cars were in on the 58th lap, and Prost immediately takes the lead.

7 →

7 - The second start was fatal for Piquet. Prost's winning margin was greater than his margin in the first race. He dropped to third place.

PRACTICE

John Watson said after Spain that he would be competitive in France, and that was absolutely true. The Ulsterman set the fastest time of the first practice session. But it was a strange, two part, hour-long session. After 20 minutes, down came the rain, which made it look as though it would be to the advantage of the fastest in the first part of the session at that time, the two Renault drivers. But the rain didn't last long and the track dried quickly, so that 15 minutes from the end, drivers were able to set quick times again. That was when Watson set his fastest time, beating Arnoux by four hundredths of a second. The Ferrari drivers hadn't set good times during the first part of the session, but redressed the situation: Villeneuve was fourth fastest and Pironi was just behind him. De Angelis did well to set sixth fastest time. He'd started the session late because of a broken engine had to be changed after the morning's unofficial practice. The Talbot Ligier team wasn't entirely happy. The narrow track cars weren't as quick as they had been in pre-race testing, but Laffite was seventh fastest. None of the Goodyear runners were particularly quick. Reutemann was eighth fastest, but Jones was only 12th after gearbox trouble. Jones was just in front of Piquet who'd had trouble with his brakes.

The second session was very exciting. The track was quicker, and it was a real battle between Arnoux, Watson, Prost and Piquet as to whom would be faster. Arnoux made the ultimate effort, and on the ragged edge, set the fastest time, with the added satisfaction of being four tenths quicker than Watson who was second fastest. Prost suffered understeer but set the same time as the Marlboro driver, but later in the session, so he had to settle for the second row. Piquet was the first of the Goodyear men on the second row, a second slower than Arnoux. De Cesaris confirmed the Marlboro's promise with fifth fastest time. Neither Williams nor Ferrari came up to expectations.

At the other end of the scale, it was good to see Henton get his Toleman amongst the 24 fastest, but at the last minute, Alboreto and Serra bumped him off the grid again. So the non-qualifiers comprised Stohr, Henton, Borgudd, Gabbiani and Warwick.

RACE

The start procedure failed badly. The light turned green, then back to red for a moment, and then stayed on green. The principal victim of this was pole man Arnoux who was only eighth on the first lap. Piquet, on the other hand, made a superb start and led from Watson, Prost, de Cesaris, Villeneuve, Laffite, Reutemann, Arnoux and Andretti.

This order changed on the third lap when Prost took second place from Watson. Further back, Andretti and Jones had come into contact, and the Williams driver stopped in the pits for three minutes to have a steering arm replaced.

There was little change at the front. Piquet quickly built up a considerable lead over Prost: between six and ten seconds depending on backmarkers. Watson held third place, not far behind the Renault. Fourth place was more disputed. Villeneuve held that position until lap five when Reutemann got past, who in turn lost out to Arnoux on the 33rd lap. The Renault driver had done well to overtake Laffite, de Cesaris and Villeneuve in quick succession.

At half distance, Piquet led from Prost, Watson, Arnoux, Reutemann and Villeneuve. Rebaque held an excellent seventh place, having climbed up from 16th on the grid. He'd overtaken Tambay, Giacomelli, Mansell, Andretti, Pironi, de Cesaris and Laffite.

Villeneuve led no less than six cars in a Jarama-like queue. Rebaque, Laffite, de Angelis, de Cesaris and the delayed Jones ware all held up by the Ferrari, and Piquet even found himself involved until the Ferrari retired on the 42cnd lap. Shortly after Reutemann repassed Arnoux.

But both first and second placed drivers were in trouble. Piquet's tyres, like those of the other Goodyear runners, were going off, and little by little, Prost began to catch up. Nelson made signs that he was going to stop in his pit, even though the Frenchman had lost fourth gear some laps previously, and he too was being caught by Watson. But then the skies darkened and down came the rain. After 59 laps, the clerk of the course stopped the race, and the order at 58 laps was taken.

Piquet would have preferred the race to have run another lap and have covered 75 per cent of the total distance, but instead, it was decided to start again for another 22 laps. On softer tyres and with his gearbox repaired, it was Prost who took the lead from Watson, both of whom managed to shut out Piquet. Although Watson briefly passed Prost on that first lap, he slid wide on the damp track and the Frenchman pulled away fractionally to win by just 1.8s. Arnoux was third, but Piquet was a distant fifth, having followed Pironi all the way and been totally unable to get past him. De Cesaris finished sixth. Prost had been seven seconds behind Piquet in the first race, but in 22 laps, he'd pulled out 31 seconds, and won the French Grand Prix overall from Watson, while Piquet dropped to a disappointing third. □

Dijon statistics

FRENCH GRAND PRIX

Date : July 5, 1981
Circuit lenght : 2.361 miles
Race distance : 80 laps, 188.896 miles
Conditions : sun and showers
Attendance : 90.000 spectators

THE RECORD

(last five races)

1976 : HUNT (McLaren Ford)
1977 : ANDRETTI (Lotus Ford)
1978 : ANDRETTI (Lotus Ford)
1979 : JABOUILLE (Renault Turbo)
1980 : JONES (Williams Ford)

STARTING GRID

ARNOUX	**WATSON**
Renault RE 30	Marlboro McLaren
1'05"95	1'06"36 MP4
PROST	**PIQUET**
Renault RE 30	Brabham BT 49C
1'06"36	1'06"91
DE CESARIS	**LAFFITE**
Marlboro MP 4	Talbot Ligier JS17
1'07"03	1'07"09
REUTEMANN	**DE ANGELIS**
Williams FW 07/B	Lotus 87
1'07"42	1'07"52
JONES	**ANDRETTI**
Williams FW 07	Alfa 179
1'07"53	1'07"56
VILLENEUVE	**GIACOMELLI**
Ferrari 126 C	Alfa Romeo 179
1'07"60	1'07"63
MANSELL	**PIRONI**
Lotus 87	Ferrari 126 C
1'07"72	1'08"09
REBAQUE	**TAMBAY**
Brabham BT 49	Talbot Ligier JS17
1'08"21	1'08"47
ROSBERG	**PATRESE**
Fittipaldi F8C	Arrows A3
1'09"35	1'09"37
CHEEVER	**DALY**
Tyrrell 010	March 811
1'09"88	1'09"94
SURER	**SALAZAR**
Theodore TY 02	Ensign N 180 B
1'10"21	1'10"50
ALBORETO	***SERRA**
Tyrrell 010	Fittipaldi F8C
1'10"64	1'10"86

* Chico Serra

* Did not start following accident during warm-up.

Non-qualified :

STOHR (Arrows A3) 1'11"24
HENTON (Toleman) 1'11"28
BORGUDD (ATS D6) 1'12"20
GABBIANI (Osella FA1) 1'12"24
WARWICK (Toleman) 1'13"65.

TIMES IN UNOFFICIAL PRACTICE

FRIDAY MORNING		SATURDAY MORNING		SUNDAY MORNING	
Mansell	1'18"81	Piquet	1'06"95	Reutemann	1'09"48
Prost	1'20"24	Jones	1'07"57	Piquet	1'09"70
Piquet	1'20"39	Watson	1'07"66	Jones	1'09"92
Villeneuve	1'20"54	Reutemann	1'07"94	Rebaque	1'10"87
Laffite	1'20"64	De Angelis	1'08"08	Arnoux	1'10"89
Jones	1'20"70	Andretti	1'08"22	De Angelis	1'10"91
De Cesaris	1'20"82	Rebaque	1'08"36	Watson	1'10"96
Surer	1'20"88	Prost	1'08"37	Mansell	1'11"33
Rebaque	1'20"88	Pironi	1'08"37	Prost	1'11"35
De Angelis	1'21"24	Arnoux	1'08"40	Laffite	1'11"35
Patrese	1'21"57	Laffite	1'08"99	De Cesaris	1'11"40
Pironi	1'21"94	De Cesaris	1'09"23	Villeneuve	1'11"44
Watson	1'21"99	Giacomelli	1'09"98	Pironi	1'11"86
Cheever	1'22"23	Tambay	1'10"04	Tambay	1'11"98
Giacomelli	1'22"28	Cheever	1'10"19	Andretti	1'12"39
Tambay	1'22"54	Villeneuve	1'10"20	Giacomelli	1'12"54
Reutemann	1'22"80	Patrese	1'10"67	Patrese	1'12"96
Gabbiani	1'22"90	Mansell	1'10"77	Rosberg	1'13"49
Andretti	1'22"91	Daly	1'10"80	Surer	1'13"58
Rosberg	1'23"23	Salazar	1'11"11	Cheever	1'13"65
Arnoux	1'23"58	Serra	1'11"40	Daly	1'13"69
Daly	1'24"20	Surer	1'11"44	Salazar	1'13"77
Alboreto	1'25"47	Borgudd	1'11"90	Serra	1'14"19
Serra	1'27"57	Alboreto	1'11"99	Alboreto	1'14"43
Stohr	1'28"85	Gabbiani	1'12"19		
Salazar	1'34"87	Stohr	1'12"20		
Warwick	1'40"79	Warwick	1'12"37		
		Henton	1'12"63		

CONSTRUCTORS CUP

1. Williams 61 pts - **2.** Brabham 29 pts - **3.** Ferrari 28 pts - **4.** Renault 18 pts - **5.** Talbot-Ligier 17 pts - **6.** Lotus 13 pts - **7.** McLaren 11 pts - **8.** Arrows 10 pts - **9.** Tyrrell 5 pts - **10.** Ensign 4 pts - **11.** Alfa 3 pts - **12.** Theodore 1 pt.

THEIR FASTEST RACE LAPS

	Time	Lap no/part
Prost	1'09"14	6/2. seance
Watson	1'09"30	8/2. seance
Piquet	1'09"29	8/2. seance
Arnoux	1'09"32	9/2. seance
Pironi	1'10"38	7/2. seance
De Angelis	1'10"99	10/2. seance
Mansell	1'11"13	16/2. seance
Andretti	1'09"97	11/2 seance
Rebaque	1'10"75	16/2. seance
Reutemann	1'10"76	6/1. seance
De Cesaris	1'09"97	9/2. seance
Surer	1'12"24	14/2. seance
Cheever	1'12"21	13/2. seance
Patrese	1'13"19	8/1. seance
Giacomelli	1'13"55	10/1. seance
Alboreto	1'14"15	10/2. seance
Jones	1'09"85	11/2. seance
Laffite	1'12"39	44/1. seance
Daly	1'13"93	28/1. seance
Villeneuve	1'12"56	4/1. seance
Tambay	1'13"37	28/1. seance
Rosberg	1'15"01	5/1. seance
Salazar	1'14"30	6/1. seance
Serra		

FIRST PART (58 LAPS)

1. PIQUET	1 hr 09'41"03.
2. PROST	6"79 behind
3. WATSON	7"28 behind
4. REUTEMANN	10"08 behind
5. ARNOUX	10"19 behind
6. REBAQUE	one lap behind
7. LAFFITE	one lap behind
8. DE ANGELIS	one lap behind
9. PIRONI	one lap behind
10. MANSELL	one lap behind
11. ANDRETTI	one lap behind
12. SURER	one la p behind
13. GIACOMELLI	one lap behind
14. DE CESARIS	two laps behind
15. PATRESE	two laps behind
16. CHEEVER	two laps behind
17. ALBORETO	two laps behind
18. JONES	four laps behind
19. DALY	seven laps behind

SECOND PART (22 LAPS)

1. PROST	26'00"31.
2. WATSON	1"80 behind
3. ARNOUX	9"99 behind
4. PIRONI	30"63 behind
5. PIQUET	13"01 behind
6. DE CESARIS	36"25 behind
7. ANDRETTI	41"01 behind
8. JONES	53"06 behind
9. MANSELL	54"36 behind
10. DE ANGELIS	57"37 behind
11. REBAQUE	one lap behind
12. CHEEVER	one lap behind
13. SURER	one lap behind
14. PATRESE	one lap behind
15. ALBORETO	one lap behind
16. REUTEMANN	two laps behind
17. GIACOMELLI	two laps behind

PROVISIONAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Positions/Driver	Long Beach	Brazil	Argentina	San-Marino	Belgium	Monaco	Spain	France	TOTAL
1. Reutemann	6	9	6	4	9	—	3	—	37
2. Piquet	4	—	9	9	—	—	—	4	26
3. Jones	9	6	3	—	—	6	—	—	24
4. Villeneuve		—	—	—	3	9	9	—	21
5. Laffite		1	—	—	6	4	6	—	17
6. Prost		—	4	—	—	—	—	9	13
7. Patrese		4	—	6	—	—	—	—	10
Watson		—	—	—	—	4	6	—	10
9. De Angelis		2	1	—	2	—	2	1	8
10. Pironi		—	—	2	—	3	—	2	7
11. Arnoux		—	2	—	—	—	—	3	5
Cheever	2	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	5
Mansell		—	—	—	4	—	1	—	5
14. Surer		3	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
15. Andretti	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Rebaque		—	—	3	—	—	—	—	3
17. De Cesaris		—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Tambay	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

OFFICIAL PRACTICE TIMES

	1st session	2nd session
Arnoux	1'07"09	**1'05"95**
Watson	1'07"05	**1'06"36**
Prost	1'07"57	**1'06"36**
Piquet	1'09"21	**1'06"91**
De Cesaris	1'08"83	**1'07"03**
Laffite	1'08"71	**1'07"09**
Reutemann	1'08"83	**1'07"42**
De Angelis	1'08"40	**1'07"52**
Jones	1'09"28	**1'07"53**
Andretti	1'10"09	**1'07"56**
Villeneuve	**1'07"60**	1'07"68
Giacomelli	1'09"81	**1'07"63**
Mansell	1'09"06	**1'07"72**
Pironi	**1'08"09**	1'08"27
Rebaque	1'09"69	**1'08"21**
Tambay	1'09"51	**1'08"47**
Rosberg	1'10"13	**1'09"35**
Patrese	**1'09"37**	1'10"14
Cheever	1'11"50	**1'09"88**
Daly	1'12"10	**1'09"94**
Surer	1'19"46	**1'10"21**
Salazar	1'15"59	**1'10"50**
Alboreto	1'12"37	**1'10"64**
Serra	1'13"60	**1'10"86**
Stohr	1'13"13	**1'11"24**
Henton	1'29"13	**1'11"28**
Borgudd	1'14"62	**1'12"20**
Gabbiani	**1'12"24**	1'36"20
Warwick	**1'13"65**	

RESULTS ON AGREGATE (58 + 22)

1. PROST	Renault RE 30	1 hr 35'48"13. 118.304 mph
2. WATSON	Marlboro McLaren MP 4	2"29 behind
3. PIQUET	Brabham BT 49 C	24"22 behind
4. ARNOUX	Renault RE 30	42"30 behind
5. PIRONI	Ferrari 126 C	one lap behind
6. DE ANGELIS	Lotus 87	one lap behind
7. MANSELL	Lotus 87	one lap behind
8. ANDRETTI	Alfa Romeo 179	one lap behind
9. REBAQUE	Brabham BT 49 C	one la p behind
10. REUTEMANN	Williams FW 07/B	two laps behind
11. DE CESARIS	Marlboro McLaren MP 4	two laps behind
12. SURER	Theodore TY02	two laps behind
13. CHEEVER	Tyrrell 010	three laps behind
14. PATRESE	Arrows A 3	three laps behind
15. GIACOMELLI	Alfa Romeo 179	three laps behind
16. ALBORETO	Tyrrell 010	three laps behind
17. JONES	Williams FW 07/8	four laps behind

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ap by lap - Giro per giro - Runde um Runde - Tour par tour - Vuelta a vuelta - Rond

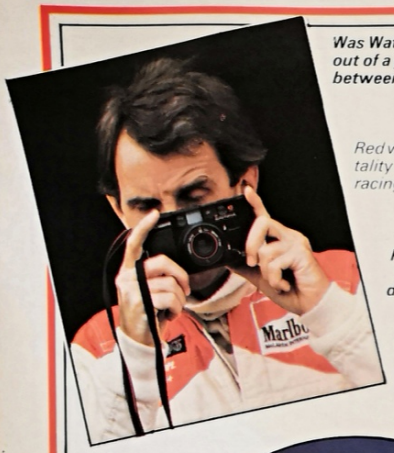
16 RENE ARNOUX (F)	Renault RE 30	1
7 JOHN WATSON (GB)	Marlboro MP 4/1	2
15 ALAIN PROST (F)	Renault RE 30	3
5 NELSON PIQUET (BR)	Brabham BT 49	4
8 ANDREA DE CESARIS (I)	Mc Laren M29C	5
26 JACQUES LAFFITE (F)	Talbot-Ligier JS17	6
2 CARLOS REUTEMANN (RA)	Williams FW 07/B	7
11 ELIO DE ANGELIS (I)	Lotus 87	8
1 ALAN JONES (AUS)	Williams FW 07/B	9
22 MARIO ANDRETTI (USA)	Alfa Romeo 179	10
27 GILLES VILLENEUVE (CDN)	Ferrari 126 C	11
23 BRUNO GIACOMELLI (I)	Alfa Romeo 179	12
12 NIGEL MANSELL (GB)	Lotus 87	13
28 DIDIER PIRONI (F)	Ferrari 126 C	14
6 HECTOR REBAQUE (MEX)	Brabham BT 49/C	15
25 PATRICK TAMBAY (F)	Renault RE 30	16
20 KEKE ROSBERG (SF)	Fittipaldi F8C	17
29 RICCARDO PATRESE (I)	Arrows A3	18
3 EDDIE CHEEVER (USA)	Tyrrell 010	19
17 DEREK DALY (IRL)	March 811 02 03	20
33 MARC SURER (CH)	Theodore TY 02	21
14 EMILIO SALAZAR (RCH)	Ensign N 180 B	22
4 MICHELE ALBORETO (I)	Tyrrell 010	23
21 CHICO SERRA (BR)	Fittipaldi F8	24

PIT STOPS AND RETIREMENTS

Jones : stopped third lap, changed steering arm, stopped 17th and 18th laps, changed tyres
Salazar : retired 7th lap, suspension
Rosberg : retired 12th lap, broken rear suspension
Daly : changed tyres and freed sticking throttle, 25th lap, retired 6th lap, part 2, broken engine
Tambay : stopped 29th lap, changed tyres, retired 31st lap, seized wheel bearing
Villeneuve : retired 43rd lap, fuel feed
De Cesaris : stopped 56th lap, rear suspension repair
Laffite : accident, 1st lap, part 2

Giro per giro - Runde um Runde - Tour par tour - Vuelta a vuelta - Ronde na ronde - I

Postcard from Dijon



Was Wattie trying to do the pro cameramen out of a job? GPI caught him taking snaps between practice sessions

Red wine and pretty girls in the Talbot hospitality area demonstrated that there's more to racing than just cars...

Po faces, for once: Messrs Laffite, Jabouille, Blanchet (of Michelin) and others settle down to watch the televised McEnroe-Borg Wimbledon clash on Saturday afternoon

Dijon from the air: probably the best view of a circuit

Happy 33rd birthday, René!

The Ferrari transporter starts the last mile of its long journey from Maranello

This year at Dijon, it wasn't just the dogs that behaved like animals. .

...indeed, the specially imported "blue beret" security guards exceeded their duties with uncalled-for ferocity. Roll on Silverstone...

TEDDY TRIES MARC

When Marc Surer failed to raise the funds necessary to pay for his Ensign drive, he was reluctantly asked to stand down for one race, at Jarama. By the time Dijon came around, however, a place had become available in the Theodore team owned by Hong Kong millionaire Teddy Yip. Marc was in the right place (Silverstone) at the right time (on the day that Patrick Tambay signed for Talbot) to be given the drive, even though his first race coincided with the start of a tyre war which, in theory at least, should have been against the interests of the little teams like Theodore. As Tambay already had shown, however, the Tony Southgate designed Theodore is far from disgraced, even in exalted "factory" company. Despite a problem in the warm-up which prevented him from testing a last-minute change in most of the settings, Marc got involved in a long (and successful!) battle with Giacomelli's Alfa Romeo which proved to be the most exciting of the entire race. (Photos Bernard Bakalian/SAM - Bernard Asset/A + P).

A HARD GRIND

When you don't have the latest tyres, and your new car is still a couple of weeks away, it can be tough trying to qualify. Eddie Cheever test the strength of his Tyrrell (and indulges in a sport of metal-reducing) as he hits the kerb in front of Reutemann and Gabbiani. (Photo Bernard Asset/A + P).

FAREWELL TO THE 87?

Although they only made their first public appearance at Monaco, the Lotus 87s' third and final race was probably Dijon. The 87s' narrow track specification, while ideal for Monaco and Jarama, is not expected to suit the high speed tracks like Silverstone and Hockenheim. Colin Chapman has already promised to produce his twin-chassis Lotus 88 again for the British GP, and the RAC Motor Sport Association's scrutineers have provisionally accepted it. That would mean that Elio de Angelis' 6th place in France gives the 87 the distinction of having scored points in every GP which it contested. (Photo John Blakemore).

A CHANGE OF FORTUNE

Having smiled so generously on Gilles Villeneuve at Monaco and Jarama, Lady Luck deserted the Canadian in France and smiled instead on local favourite Didier Pironi (who has made his home not far from Dijon, in Geneva). Gilles, nevertheless, was in the spectacular opposite-locking style which is now expected of him (see him finding the limit in the rain!). The interruption of the race, however, played right into the hands of the calculating Pironi, who was able to make some adjustments to the car that parlayed 9th place in the first heat into a much more satisfactory 5th place overall after the second. Handling is still the weakest point of the Italian cars, and it may make things difficult for Villeneuve and Pironi at Silverstone. But the terrific acceleration of the V6 turbocars could be their salvation at Hockenheim, where there are two tight chicanes to be negotiated. (Photos Bernard Asset/A + P - Jean-Luc Taillade/A + P).

FACE TO FACE

NELSON PIQUET

Signed by Parmalat-Brabham as Niki Lauda's understudy for 1979, Nelson Piquet is in his second year as the undisputed leader of the Chessington team. A contentious incident with Alan Jones at Montreal lost him what had been a good chance of winning last year's world championship, and the atmosphere has scarcely been improved by further incidents involving the Australian this year. Behind a pair of unfathomably dark eyes, Piquet retains a deep and analytical talent for driving racing cars. At the age of 28, however, he also posesses a mischievousness which (like those eyes!) must surely be inherited from his Amazonian forebears. Reckless and impulsive? Or cold and calculating? As this interview reveals, there's a fascinating balance of these qualities in this gifted Brazilian.

by Mike DOODSON

When Niki Lauda was in his third season of F1, like you are this year, he made some driving mistakes which cost him the world championship. Do you see any similarities in your situation?
I think it's pure coincidence. There are two ways to approach motor racing. There's the Reutemann approach, which says that if you don't take risks, then you won't make any mistakes. It's working very well for him, or at least it has done up until now. But if anyone starts to threaten him, and he doesn't want to fight, he will lose simply because he won't take risks. The other approach is to race hard all the time: and if you take risks, for sure you'll make mistakes... like Alan Jones does, like I do, like almost everybody does. OK, sometimes the Reutemann approach will work. But I notice that when somebody gets close to him on the track, he doesn't seem to want to fight.

After mistakes like the ones you made at Jarama, how does your team react? Do they get very upset?
Gordon (Murray) was very upset at Jarama. He was convinced that I would have been able to cach the leaders, like Laffite and Watson did, if I hadn't gone off the road. But I had to tell him that I was holding that position only by driving over the limit, every lap. I was having to keep up by taking big, big risks under braking: not in the corners, because the car was handling so very badly. The mechanics? I suppose they get upset, though they don't say anything directly to me. But Bernie (Ecclestone) has never complained about my accidents. I think you could write off a car, even set it on fire, and he wouldn't say anything. But if you're slow, he doesn't hesitate to come and let you know...

Although your team started the season with hydro-pneumatic suspension and skirts, virtually the same as those used now by everyone else, there were certain objections to begin with from other teams. How serious a handicap was that for you?
We lost two months of development. The other teams discovered that they would have to follow our lead, because our interpretation of the rules was completely legal, despite what they all said. But when they tried to make a legal system like ours, which went up and down automatically, they found that they couldn't. So they all got together to change the rules and decided that it would be alright if they fitted a switch to their cars to control the height of the suspension. That's why we put the big switch in our car in Belgium. We wanted someone to protest, so we made it easy for them to see that it was illegal. But they were all too busy making illegal systems of their own...

Looking at the cars on the track, it's possible to see that they are very stiffly suspended. Yet the 6cm rule was supposed to get rid of the hard springs which were used in conjunction with sliding skirts last year...
Oh, the cars are much more dangerous now than they were last year. You must realise that if you drop the car 6cm, and you want to keep the car's aerodynamic performance through a race, you have to avoid wearing the fixed skirts. So you can't have any suspension movement at all, you have to make the springs almost solid. The driver feels every bump on the track. The vibrations affect your neck, head, arms, fingers... every part of your body. At places like Jarama and Monte Carlo, it is unbelievably hard to drive, although fortunately Silverstone is not so bad because it's smoother. But with these solid springs, most of the suspension loads have to be taken by the tyres and the suspension arms. Because the Brabham is very well designed and built, I'm not worried about mechanical breakages. But when some of the less technical teams find out that they have to go solid with their suspension to go quick, then it is possible that they will not understand the incredible forces on the suspension. For sure, there will be a lot of suspension breakages...

You have said that the Brabham BT50 with the turbo BMW engine is already very fast. How does it feel to drive?
We had the car at Silverstone recently and I was able to do 10 laps with it. The handling was complete understeer, which is very bad at Silverstone, where even a little bit of understeer makes you two seconds a lap slow. But even with bad understeer, the BMW car was still faster than the Ford! I did a 1m 12.5s time with the Ford car, which was good... but if we had got the BMW properly balanced in the handling, then we would be able to do 1m 10s laps at Silverstone, no problem. On the straight, the turbo is already 20 km/h faster than the Ford. Even in front of the pits, accelerating from the chicane, it's 11 or 12 kilometres faster. I am having to brake and change down for

→

some of the corners which I take flat in 5th with the Ford...

Why aren't you racing it, then?

Oh, I don't think it will be ready until next year. We had very good, powerful engines from BMW in October last year, but we are still waiting for Bosch to make us a perfect ignition system. We have tested different ignition three or four times, but it always has different problems. Unfortunately, if you have something even slightly wrong with the ignition on a turbocar, like the advance and retard, the engine blows up within 100 metres, before your can do anything. We are also waiting for a new fuel system, in fact we've been waiting for seven months already. But the engine itself is unbelievably good. I am sure that it already has 650 horsepower, which I think is 30 or 40 more than the Ferrari has right now.

The races which you had at Argentina and Imola this year stand out in the memory because you won with a clear mechanical advantage. Are these the races which give you most satisfaction?

I suppose people remember them because I won without problems. I think last year's race at Imola was good, and this year's, because they were good results for us, nine points easy. But I remember races like Austria, last year, where I drove really hard. I had no clutch, the handling was not very good, but I still managed to drive the car, and I was very satisfied to finish 5th. A lot of races give you satisfaction even when you don't get points. Personally, I would have felt very good just to have finished at Jarama this year, because quite honestly the car was undriveable: I know because I was the unfortunate guy who had to drive it there, I know how hard I was having to concentrate just to stay on the road. To get among the leaders, I was having to take a risk every time I used the brakes... and unfortunately I fell off the road.

Would you feel better if you had a number 2 driver who had a more technical approach than Hector? Would that help you to get the car sorted out quicker?

No. It doesn't work like that. I have my

race car and my T-car: that's all I need at the races. What we need is more testing, we need to go to the circuits in advance, like everyone else does, but which we don't do. We need more people in the team, too. It is a very big responsibility for Gordon.

Does Bernie Ecclestone's position as the head of FOCA interfere with his activities as owner of the Brabham team?

If there is a conflict between the rights of the Brabham team and those of the other teams, I think it is a disadvantage. For example, look what happened at Imola, where Ferrari brought influence to have everything changed on our car. Some of the teams didn't want to alter their cars, so we didn't start practice on time. In the end, we changed our car a lot, just to suit the Italians, and we raced because it was decided that it would be bad for the sport if we threatened not to take part in the race. Then there was the question of the switch which I mentioned. It was clearly illegal to use a switch like that, and we could have successfully protested everyone who had fitted one - if Bernie's first priority was winning races. But he doesn't want any more political aggravation, that's my opinion. For him, the Grand Prix comes first, and his team has to come second...

After three seasons with Brabham, do you feel tempted to leave and perhaps to try your luck with another team?

Of course, you have to look for the best financial deal. If I don't get what I want from Brabham, I will go to a team which makes the right offer. Naturally I would have to think carefully, because I am very happy with Brabham: I always dreamed about driving for Brabham, ever since I met them in Brasilia while I was still racing karts. I also have a very good relationship with Gordon Murray. My English is not so good, and I am not a very technical person, but Gordon understands exactly what I am trying to say. He always finds out what is wrong with the car, because he's such a hard working person, very methodical. Even though it wasn't until after the race, we now know (for example) what was wrong with the car at Jarama. It would be difficult, of course, to move to another team. I think it would take at least a year to be able to work like that with another engineer.

Can we go over the incidents which put you out of three consecutive races, at Zolder, Monaco and Jarama? Now that you have had a chance to analyse them one by one, how do you feel?

People say that I can't stand pressure, but that's not true. Always in my life, I have been running in front: karting, Formula 3, even at the beginning in Formula 1. I don't feel that I am under unbearable pressure from Alan Jones, I can stay completely cold in the car, even if I am not so happy when he pushes me off the road, like at Zolder. The place where he did it was a corner where it is not possible to overtake, at least not if you want to avoid a shunt. And he shunted my car twice! First, he hit my rear tyre with his front tyre, pushing me wide. Then when he got in the corner he gave it so much power that he hit my front tyre with one of his rear wheels. It broke my front suspension and I went off the road. It was a big collision, I am sure that he damaged something on the suspension of his car.

That is the reason why he had his accident later. He said "Oh, it jumped out of 4th gear," but that's bullshit. Fourth gear never jumps out in the middle of a corner...

At Monaco, where people said he was putting pressure on me, I knew that he could not pass me. My car was good in the fast corners, and his car was slow. The only way he would have been able to overtake me there would have been to go over the top of me. It's easy to say now that I should have waited behind Tambay, but he had held me up very badly when I had lapped him earlier in the race, in fact I lost seven seconds. I don't think Tambay saw me, because he suddenly closed the gap. I locked the brakes to avoid him, because it would have been a much more serious accident if I had hit his car, and I went off the road, into the barrier.

At Jarama, there were two mistakes by me. First, I tried to pass Andretti, and it was lucky that we didn't hit wheel to wheel, because we would have flown off the road. Instead, his rear tyre ate a big hole in my sidepod. The main problem at Jarama - as I said - was that the car was undriveable. In the quick corner before the pit straight, where Laffite was flat, I was having to lift, but I was still trying to pass him by braking later. That's why I went off the road, I was taking too many risks to compensate for the handling...

Is the situation very serious between you and Alan Jones? Is the press making too much of it?

When Jones pushed me off the road in Canada last year, there must have been about 50 people standing at the corner who saw exactly what happened. We were side by side and he pushed me into the wall. But he was not man enough to admit that he had done something wrong. He came to me and said nothing except "No, it was my line, you were wrong." It was the same after he pushed me off the road again at Zolder. If I do something wrong, I go straight to the other driver so that we can straighten out any problem: I haven't yet had time to talk to Andretti about the incident at Jarama, but I'm sure that we'll be able to have a friendly discussion. What makes me upset is that not one of the accidents which I have had with other drivers has ever been shown on television. I had a big accident at Monza with Regazzoni in 1979, when he missed a gear and tried to stop me from going past him on the straight, and I had the two accidents with Jones, in Canada and Belgium... but the television didn't catch either of them.

I never get in my car and think of pushing another driver off the road, though I'm sure there will be an opportunity one day to get even with Jones, you wait and see. It will have to be in a race where I have nothing to lose, perhaps when he is leading the championship or when Reutemann is only one point in front of him in the championship... and he wants to lap me. Perhaps I will have the chance to take him off the road and give the points to Reutemann... and afterwards I will go to see him with a straight face and say "Oh, I am sorry... I must have lost the brakes" or some other excuse.

Are you still getting pleasure from driving racing cars?

Oh, yes. Any kind of cars. This year I've been driving sports cars for BMW, in long distance races, I like that. But it's not just cars, because I like competition of any sort. In cars, though, I feel I have the best opportunity. But I don't think I would like to give up racing yet.

If you weren't driving racing cars, can you imagine doing anything else? Could you be a team manager, perhaps?

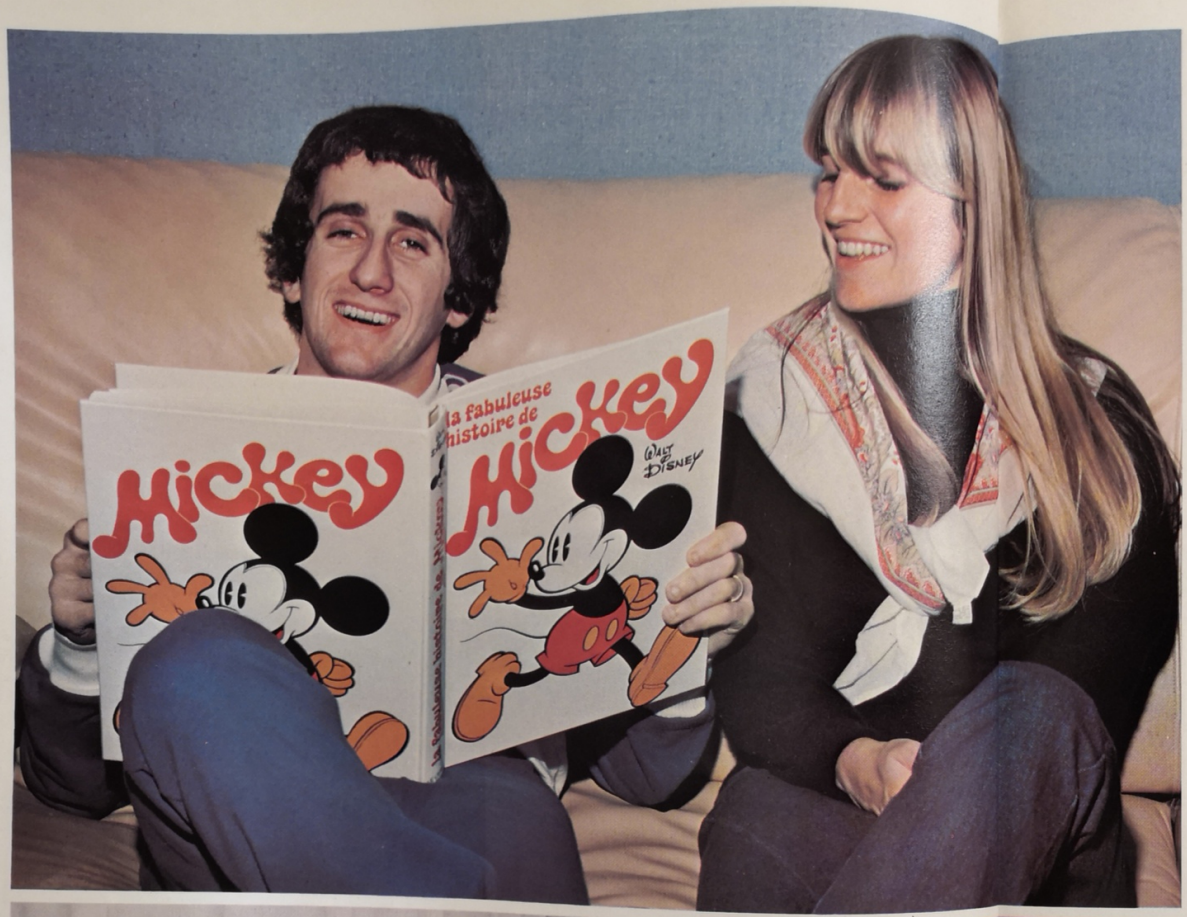
No way! When I am in the pits, and not racing, I get incredibly nervous. At the Nürburgring, in the 1000 kms, and Stuck was driving our BMW M1, I nearly died of nerves. I don't know why.

What about the pressures on you? Do you hate always having the press want to talk to you?

If it's people I know, it's easy. The problem is talking with people you don't know, the ones who want to ask questions like "When did you start in racing?"... "Why did you change your name from Souto Maior?"... that sort of thing. When they start with that, I tell you I want to die. I don't like all the travelling by plane, but I do enjoy driving myself between races, that can be fun. But I don't get much chance. I have had a very nice Mercedes 500 SEL for almost a year and I still haven't done more than about 18,000 kms in it...

It seems that your team doesn't have quite the same technical superiority now that it had at the beginning of the year. How do you assess your chances now in the world championship?

It's difficult to say. But one year ago it was more or less the same. I was about 12 points behind Alan Jones in the world championship, but I was able to catch him. I was leading the championship at Montreal, but I lost the title because my engine blew up. It's stupid to try to make forecasts. I may not score any more points this year, because anything can happen. Shunts at the start... engines blowing up... problems with tyres. That's motor racing. But I think we have a good chance still. The car is good, we had a fantastic test at Silverstone. I haven't given up any hopes of being champion this year. Not yet. □



Alain and his wife Anne-Marie settle down to some serious reading. Anne-Marie used to be a school-teacher, and hates going to motor races

Prost has tremendous vitality, but looks forwad to the tranquil life of a family man

ALAIN PROST, NEW BOY WONDER

Alain Prost was a new boy to Formula 1 not so long ago, displaying talent and unbridled enthusiasm

Any analysis of Alain Prost has to be approached in two ways. On the one hand, he'e a simple sort of bloke whose delightful approachability is exactly the same now, after his first F1 victory, as it always was when he was on his way up through Formula Renault racing. There's his more complex side, however, because of the contrasts between his strengths behind the wheel and his cozy home life, between his very obvious ambition and his otherwise tranquil personality... and between the maturity of his driving and the downright boyishness which continually bubbles up when he's away from the circuits. Could Prost be the next Stewart or Fittipaldi ? No matter. There's no useful purpose to be served by such facile comparisons. One day, perhaps, it will be to Alain Prost that the pundits make reference.

by Eric BHAT

Madame Prost is even worse than her son. It's quite something to have won your first GP with scarcely one and a half seasons' experience in F1 behind you. But to get into the pits at Monaco, with nothing better than an identity card and a lot of cheek as your credential, is an even greater achievement. Yet that's exactly what Alain's mum managed to do last month at the most closely controlled GP of the year. You would expect as much of a red-hot race fan, but there can be few fans who have as much self-confidence as this fine lady, whose son has evidently inherited all her qualities of determination. It is rumoured that his grandmother is even more fearless, in fact Alain has threatened more than once to invite her along to give a piece of her mind to the likes of Messrs Ecclestone or Balestre.

At this point, it would be appropriate to mention that we Frenchmen, far from being the humourless race that the Anglo Saxons care to imagine us, do in fact have certain little jokes that we enjoy amongst ourselves. In racing, our nickname for Alain is "Prostichon," a diminutive which is far too complicated to explain in full (involving, as it does, a parallel with a tiny pickled cucumber) but which will appear later in this tale...

Madame "Prostichon," Alain's wife, is a

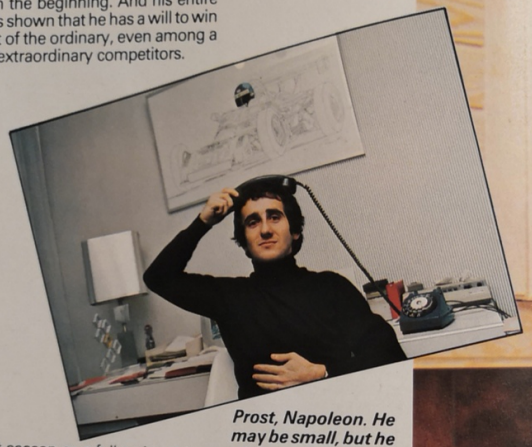
schoolteacher. Her sweet and gentle nature entirely matches the off-track qualities displayed by her man, who tends to be easy-going to a fault - or at least he was until he began to realise the responsibilities that will shortly descend upon him when a happy family event takes place. He is already a seasoned traveller, familiar by now with some of the world's most delightful cities. Yet he wouldn't dream of living anywhere except in Saint-Chamond, a somewhat less than lovely town to the south of Lyon which is the only place in which he's genuinely at home. Happiness for him is a table in the next-door restaurant with his pals gathered round him while they discuss the latest exploits of Ste Etienne, their beloved local soccer team, of which Alain is an unswervingly loyal supporter.

Nothing has been allowed to change Alain's day-to-day life, not even the demands placed on him as a jet-setting Formula 1 driver. It is most unlikely that there will ever be an international airport at Saint-Chamond, and even less likely that there will be daily flights thence to Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, Alain much prefers the thought of driving from home to the major airports than even considering a move from his homely little nest in the middle of France. It is a policy which could have far-reaching consequences if ever he finds international fame. Imagine the question in the geography class of a Chinese junior school: *"What is the capital of France?"* Quick as a flash, an 11 year old who happens to follow F1 will reply: *"San-Cha-Mung."*

As you can see, Alain loves to have familiar things constantly around him. Now aged 25, it's only a year since he finally left the house where he'd lived these many years with his parents, at last to set up a home of his own with Anne-Marie. Of course, he made sure that it wasn't too far from the family manse - which is where he's often to be found when you need to speak to him by phone. Be careful, though. If it happens to be Madame Prost (the mother) who answers the call, she won't hesitate to make sure you've got all the details correct about her son's most recent race. And under no circumstances attempt to contradict her, for then you will find yourself in her permanent and damaging disfavour.

His first steps in the hard world of Formula 1 were closely followed by his fellow-Frenchmen at the beginning of last year. They were ready with some heavy irony for this new kid on the block. *"Just because he's been topping the charts in F3, you seem to think he's going to be an instant Grand Prix ace. Formula 1 isn't as easy as that, you'll see. He's got a lot to learn."* But the very fact that they were saying those things suggested that they already regarded him as a threat. It has to be said that any fears they may have had about him vanished into thin air when they got to know him. As someone who knows how to handle his personal relationships, it was no time at all before Alain reached a close understanding with his racing comrades. Even John Watson, who might have been forgiven for taking umbrage when the youngster almost immediately started beating him, established a genuine affection for the froggy newcomer.

While we're on the subject, it has to be said that Prost was immediately topping the charts, just as he had done in the junior formulae. To recap, he scored his first world championship point in his very first race, and did it again in the second. He moved to Renault at the beginning of 1981 and didn't have to wait too long for a major Grand Prix success, at Dijon. Surprising though it may appear, it's an entirely natural progression for a sportsman who has been a winner right from the beginning. And his entire career has shown that he has a will to win that is out of the ordinary, even among a group of extraordinary competitors.



Prost, Napoleon. He may be small, but he has great ambition

In his first season as a full racing driver, 1976, he was already a consistent winner. All the signs were there: he was gifted, resolute, confident of his own ability, agreeable. Formula Renault, like Formula Ford, has the tension that is inevitable when every competitor is convinced that he's going to reach the top first. Even then however, as a one time rival recently confessed, success did not change him: *"he was a really nice guy, he didn't let winning go to his head."* He won 12 out of 13 races in the championship, then lost the final one. *"A nice gesture, how kind of you to let someone else win for a change!"* said a racing journalist at that 13th race. But Alain's black looks and long face were proof (if any were needed) that he failed to appreciate not just his defeat but also the pressman's clumsy sense of humour.

The following year, in Super-Renault, he didn't do quite as much winning, although he did win the so-called European championship.

It was after this exchange that his career entered its only decline. In 1978, with the brand new 2 litre Renault F3 engine in the back of a Martini, he had to struggle to win even one race. He got his revenge the following year by winning the European championship hands-down and also taking an important victory in the F3 GP "Junior" at Monaco. Soon afterwards, he started making trips to the Grands Prix in search of a ride. He turned up at Zandvoort, where he was suffering from an appalling cold, with his spirits at a particularly low ebb: it looked as though every door in F1 had been closed against him. Everyone knew about his F3 successes. But without a rich sponsor behind him there was no hope.

Alain has more difficulty with a corkscrew than he does with a Formula positi1 car

A month later, he joined a group of journalists on their trip to cover the two North American GPs. There was fun to be had in New York, not least in the corridor outside his hotel room. It was there that he chose, one day, to do his notorious monkey-walk, jabbering like a randy chimpanzee. Coming round the corner, though he didn't know it, were two extremely correct American matrons, who suddenly found themselves faced with this simian lookalike dragging his knuckles along the carpet. They were nonplussed: he was not. Adressing them in the only bit of English which he could summon up, he said *"I am Frensch. And you?"* The expression became the buzz word for the whole group throughout the remainder of their trip...

It was very soon afterwards, between a couple of pieces of monkey mimicry, that he met Paddy McNally, the one time British driver and journalist who now acts as Press adviser to Philip Morris/Marlboro. McNally offered Alain a chance to race the third McLaren at Watkins Glen, last race of the season. Alain's sensible reply astonished Paddy at the time, for he thought about it briefly and then refused it. *"Watkins Glen is a circuit I don't know. I think I would be much happier if I could try the car first at Paul Ricard."*

It would indeed have been stupid for him to accept. There was a strong possibility that he would make a fool of himself, even before taking into account that the invitation was to drive the third car of a team which was already having difficulty in getting two on to the grid at the time.

In due course, however, McNally kept his promise, and Alain was able to try the car at Ricard. It turned out so well that he was signed up as Patrick Tambay's replacement at McLaren. His achievements during the subsequent races were immediately noted, and if you believe the announcements which Alain made from week to week you would imagine that he was being courted by every team on the grid.

But although his contract was with McLaren, his confidence in this once-great team rapidly faded in a string of accidents that were the result of mechanical failures. He was anxious to get out of the contract if possible. The acquisition of John Barnard as the team's designer almost caused him to change his mind about leaving, at least until Watkins Glen. It was there that he once again found himself involved in a major accident through no fault of his own, and the matter was settled when he was asked, in spite of some painful minor injuries, to get into the car on race day in order to make sure that the team got its full starting money. That was too much. He decided to go ahead with his plans to accept an invitation that he had received from Renault.

Once the contract with the Régie had been signed, he amused his friends with comments like *"you're talking to the 1981 world champion."* But it wasn't until Dijon that any of that promise - even if it was in jest - could be remotely fulfilled. Yet when you're talking with Alain Prost, you get a strong feeling that one day he will indeed be world champion. His race at Dijon undoubtedly reinforced that feeling. □

A QUESTION OF TYRES

The honour of being the World Championship winning tyre manufacturer is at stake again. During the first part of this season, the various problems that originate from a tyre competition have been relatively few thanks to Michelin's virtual domination. But it was plain that one day some company would challenge that dominance. Goodyear's return has again emphasised that in the important marriage of engine, chassis, aerodynamics and tyres, the latter are of very great importance.

by Giorgio PIOLA

Goodyear's withdrawal from competition at the end of last year forced Michelin into a virtual monopoly of the Formula 1 grid. Avon's occasional involvement, and Pirelli's support of the Toleman team, have scarcely consistituted a threat to the French company, and that firm has reigned supreme in Formula 1. But Grand Prix racing hasn't suffered from this lack of tyre competition. If anything, racing has been better than ever. People haven't been scurrying down the pit lane noting tyre numbers and compounds, spying on other teams. Furthermore, brilliant performances have been acclaimed as such, because no one could say that that driver's tyres were any better than another's.

Now things have changed. The peace that has calmed the Formula 1 scene over the past few months - at least on the tyre front - is over. Goodyear's return marks a resumption of hostilities. That's not to say a tyre war, necessarily, but no one can really regret good clean competition between two tyre companies. After all, a monopoly doesn't encourage competition, and Formula 1 is all about competition. Even so, Goodyear's return perhaps seems strange if only because the company has chosen to support the two teams who have both financial and political means to assure that tyre company's return. Perhaps Bernie Ecclestone and Frank Williams see Goodvear as providing them with the sole means with which they can take on powerful turbocharged cars.

But in returning to Goodyear, these two British teams have decided to revert to cross-ply tyres, instead of the radial Michelins. Do they see the former being better than the latter? It's a comparison that people have been trying to make ever since Michelin first ran Grand Prix cars on radial tyres. Goodyear won a World Championship, but so did Michelin. This is now part two of the competition between these two companies. It's too early to tell who is going to win this round, but it is possible to study form.

During the last few years, general opinion has weighed in favour of cross-ply tyres for faster circuits. This is because the tyres narrow at high speed, and that means that there is less tyre on the surface on straights, and there's less wind resistance. But things might have changed since last year.

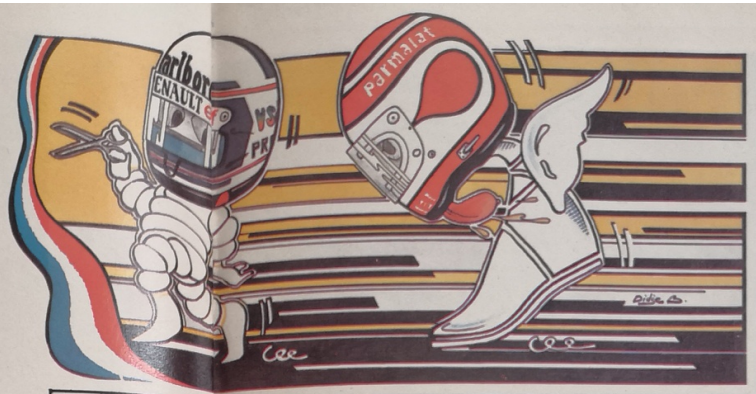
Michelin only supplied tyres to two teams in 1980: Ferrari and Renault. That meant that Pierre Dupasquier's team of tyre technicians were only able to learn and gain information from two specialised makes of car. As it happens, for instance, the tyres that didn't work well last year have been perfectly suited to different cars this year. Dupasquier never hid the fact that he wanted to work with a team using Cosworth engines. Since then, Michelin's virtual monopoly has meant that the research and race department has picked up a great deal of experience. Even so, one wonders if this experience will be enough to combat the fact that Goodyear will only be supplying two teams, and by chance, the two teams leading the World Championship currently. Not surprisingly, Michelin has also decided to concentrate on a limited number of teams: the Big Four plus Lotus and McLaren International.

Technically speaking, it will be a very interesting battle, if only because Michelin has introduced a new tyre this year, the TRX, which is of a different radial construction the previous tyres. However, the Michelin men haven't decided to use asymetric tyres such as those used by Pirelli.

The Italian firm has gained a great deal of success with the Toleman team in Formula 2, and has followed them into Formula 1, reappearing on the Grand Prix scene for the first time for many years, and consequently, totally inexperienced. Taking on a new team at the same time might well have been a wise decision, but things haven't developed quickly because the Toleman team has had its own problems and has yet to qualify a car for a Grand Prix.

As mentioned above, Pirelli has introduced the asymetric construction to Formula 1. The reason that Pirelli tyres have one squared shoulder and one rounded shoulder is because radial tyres require more negative camber than cross-ply tyres.

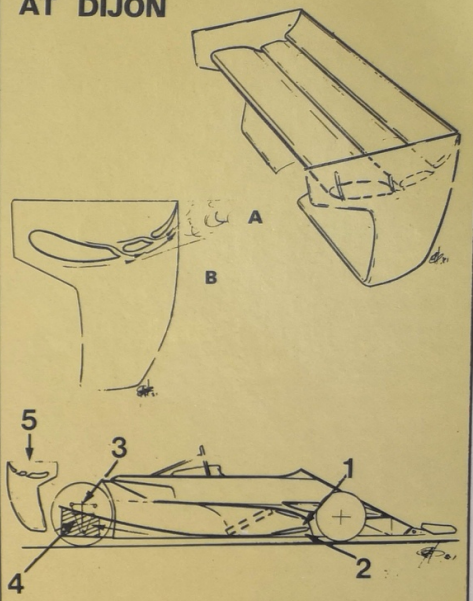
Pirelli's race and research chief, Mario Mezzanotte, gives his reasons for the choice of a radial tyre: greater reliability, wider range of adjustment and lack of deformation. According to the Italian engineer, radials allow for more sophisticated rubber compounds to be used as their working temperature is lower. However, radials have a disadvantage: they make it necessary for a much more delicate driving style. They grip cleanly right up to the limit, but then they break away suddenly. A cross-ply gives more feeling that the limit is being reached. This is because it slides more. □



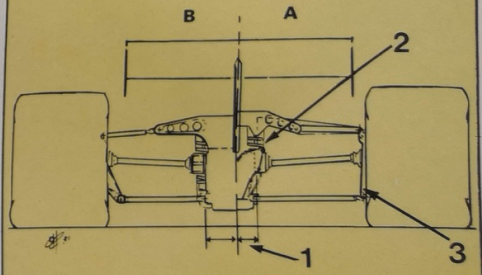
Goodyear: almost conventional. The tyres are more progressive in corners, and theoretically, more efficient on fast circuits, because they offer less wind resistance and friction on straights

Michelin: radial technology. Demand a more precise style of driving. They're constant to the limit, but then suddenly break away. But Michelin hasn't chosen to produce asymetric tyres like Pirelli's

TECHNICAL MODIFICATIONS AT DIJON



RENAULT: aerodynamic development of the RE 30s. The side pod openings are smaller, with new interior profile (1-2). The extractors are extended towards the rear of the car (4) beside the gearbox. Finally, the rear wing is made up of three parts in order to cut down turbulence.



ARROWS: modifications to improve air flow. The gearbox casing (1) is narrower than before. The gear linkage extends forward to the cockpit, mounted on the top of the gearbox, free from the air flow. New uprights are flatter in order not to create turbulence. Finally, the lower wishbones are similar to those of the McLaren.

DR.BARNARD'S SUCCESSFUL TRANSPLANT

John Watson chats to John Barnard, the man who designed McLaren's Marlboro MP4

There's no doubt about whose chassis commands the most admiration these days in the F1 paddocks: it's the swoopy-looking Marlboro MP4 designed by British engineer John Barnard. In the painful but necessary intervention which Marlboro initiated last year to combine the talents of the Project 4 team with McLaren Racing, Barnard found himself pitched directly into Formula 1. Starting with a completely fresh approach, Barnard has watched his car take 3rd place at Jarama and 2nd place at Dijon in the hands of John Watson. At this rate, there's surely a big shake-up due to take place at Silverstone.

by Mike DOODSON

The 2nd place which John Watson took at Dijon was the best result which the Marlboro-McLaren team had scored in three years. It would have been understandable if John Watson, together with designer John Barnard and team directors Ron Dennis and Teddy Mayer, had gone mad with the magnum of champagne that Watson had brought back to the transporter from the podium.

In fact, they gathered in the giant Marlboro motor home after the race with cups of tea in their hands and looks on their faces that suggested they had finished 22nd, not 2nd. But it was not disappointment that they were feeling, it was anticipation. For the reorganised McLaren team is not thinking now in terms just of places in the points: they're looking for outright victories, and they would love to score at the next race, on home ground at Silverstone.

"I reckon my car is better in the quick corners than the Renault," said Watson, *"although it was difficult to judge at Dijon because when I was fighting with Alain Prost in the second part of the race I was losing downforce every time I got within 50 metres of him. The long straight helped Alain here, in fact I am sure that he was making one and a half seconds every lap on the straight because of superior engine power. The important thing for us is that I was able to make it all back again through the corners."*

The Marlboro MP4 has commanded the attention of every single engineer since it made its first appearance at Long Beach. Studying its tough carbon fibre chassis,

The MP4 chassis: its carbon fibre monocoque is one of the innovations of the 1981 season. It was built with the help of very advanced technology in secret in the United States

mechanical accessibility and wind-cheating bodywork, even Renault's Jean Sage admitted that it is *"the most beautiful car in the whole of the paddock."*

But it's engineering, not beauty, which wins Grands Prix, and Watson explains that it is the genius of John Barnard which is putting his team back among the front runners. *"He spends a huge amount of time in the wind tunnel in search of the maximum downforce and the minimum drag. You can't get that sort of information from a driver at a circuit, because the wind tunnel is a much more consistent guide. The ultimate test is the "seat of the pants" reaction from the driver, but these days not even the best driver can tell a designer what's wrong with his car. I am sure that this is why the Williams, Brabham and McLaren teams are so far ahead of the other English teams: they have the wind tunnel facilities which are essential these days."*

Little known outside Britain, Barnard has already made his name as a perfectionist who leaves nothing to chance. A former trainee designer at Lola Cars (where he made a lasting friendship with Williams designer Patrick Head), Barnard is a practical Londoner whose international reputation was established first of all in 1979 with the Chaparral Indy car which Johnny Rutherford used to to win the 1980 500-mile race in such effortless style.

Barnard supervised the design and construction of the Chaparral entirely in England, arriving at Indianapolis in 1979 just in time to attend the party at which the famous United States Automobile Club presented Chaparral team owner Jim Hall with the coveted trophy for being the "most innovative designer" of the year. That experience evidently decided him to get his ability better known at the circuits.

For 1980, Barnard joined forces with British entrant Ron Dennis, the one-time Brabham chief mechanic whose Project 4 organisation has entered successful F2 and F3 cars for drivers like Eddie Cheever, Derek Daly, Chico Serra and Andrea de Cesaris. The design of the current carbon-fibre MP4 chassis was already well under way when a *"marriage of convenience"* was arranged last August by Marlboro between Dennis's ambitious Woking-based organisation and the McLaren team, then languishing at the lowest point in its 18 year history.

Dennis describes Barnard as a perfectionist. *"It can be quite irritating at times,"* he admits, *"because John hates to let anything be seen in public unless he's satisfied that it's perfect. Sometimes he reminds me of the proverbial absent-minded professor: he disappears into a world of his own and forgets the time of day or even where he is."*

From the driver's point of view, however, Barnard is entirely practical. *"I have worked with some good designers,"* says Watson, *"including Gordon Murray of Brabham. John and Gordon are similar sort of people. What I like about John is that he is extra positive, especially when it comes to the aerodynamics of the car. Because of his wind tunnel experience, he seems to know exactly what the car is doing on the circuit. In the whole of the weekend at Dijon, we made only one tiny little alteration to the aerodynamic settings on the car: because we have a fundamentally good chassis, we were able to get the car balanced entirely by altering springs, roll bars and ride height."*

The new McLaren team started the season gently, refusing to use the MP4 until they fully understood it. With its carbon fibre chassis, there has been a lot of new technology to absorb. But although many observers forecast almost instant F1 success for this exciting project, Barnard himself was much more cautious. *"I anticipated it would take much longer before we could think in terms of beating the established teams,"* he says. *"I felt that I would have to go through a learning curve for much longer than has proved to be the case. I'm not pretending that we understand the car completely yet, but I do feel that I'm getting a much firmer grasp on F1 and acquiring the necessary techniques."*

Barnard did a crash course on carbon-fibre engineering before he even started work on the MP4. Finding no one prepared do take him seriously in England (where there is already a good fund of practical experience with the medium), he found much more co-operation in the USA, where the basic MP4 chassis parts are made by the Hercules Corporation - a major aerospace supplier with workshops in Salt Lake City - in a giant vacuum oven called an autoclave.

"Because carbon-fibre offers so much torsional stiffness, I was able to make the basic monocoque structure slightly narrower than an equivalent aluminium chassis," he says. *"Unfortunately, we have to sacrifice some of the narowness which would be possible if we were using, say, a turbocharged four-cylinder engine, but we are able to have slightly wider sidepods than some of the other teams. Lotus, for example, are using it just like aluminium and not taking advantage of its torsional stiffness to the same extent that we are doing.*

"These differences may be pretty small, but that's the way I have decided to attack the design problems that an engineer has to face in Formula 1 these days. I must take advantage of the tiny percentages here and there: some people say it's not worth the trouble, but I don't agree."

Nor does John Watson: *"it's so rewarding to work with a designer who knows exactly what he's doing and won't be satisfied with second best. We earned 2nd place in the race at Dijon and I don't think that I could have beaten Prost in the second part, even if I had overtaken him at the start, simply because of his much more powerful engine. Fortunately, the circuits which are coming up on the schedule now combine long straights with fast corners. The MP4 is not just quick in those corners, it is outstandingly quick, and this is entirely due to the close attention which John has paid to aerodynamics in the design of the car."*

It would be wrong to describe John Barnard as a new name in F1 purely on the basis of his car's achievements in France, for he already commands the deep respect and admiration of every other designer. With his delightful car improving from race to race, however, his name and face are going to become much better known to the public.

No doubt, however, he will continue to prefer the company of his peers, the engineers like his friend Patrick Head with whom he feels most comfortable. Has his arrival in Grand Prix racing made it difficult for him to maintain his friendship with Head? *"Not really,"* he says offhandedly. *"But we certainly seem to have a lot less to talk about with each other these days..."* □

PROST *Scriptum*

Thanks to me telling you that I was going to win, I did exactly that at Dijon, so there we are, mission accomplished. Now that proves that it's not impossible. It's amazing isn't it, two little words: I won. I must admit that it's been quite hard for me to realise and evaluate just what that means. It's obviously a marvellous feeling, although I can't tell you just how good it feels just yet.

I think that I'm going to become happier every time I think of it, and more conscious of having won as the days pass. It's two days after race, and I'm writing this article just before going to Germany for testing. And I'm still in shock! I'm a little heavy headed and carried away.

Don't imagine for a moment that this heavy headedness is caused by the winner's champagne. I took a couple of gulps on the rostrum for tradition's sake, but not a lot since then. I prefer mineral water. No, if I'm drunk, it's drunk with meetings, interviews, congratulations, taps on the shoulder, big kisses, hand-shakes, that sort of thing. The TV, radio and press interviews that a winner has to go through are quite amazing. I'd never imagined it would be like that. It's incredible how congratulations are heaped onto a Grand Prix winner. But I'm not complaining, don't get me wrong. I'd much prefer to go through that than sit in the corner on my own because I hadn't qualified or something.

When the fuss begins to die down, this punch-drunk feeling of everyone rushing around me will wear off. Then I will realise that I won the French Grand Prix, and I'll be able to appreciate just what that means, the full importance of the event.

But there's one thing that I've already realised is important. In English, the expression might be "broken my duck". There's a rather ruder French equivalent, but it basically means that I've broken a barrier, and succeeded for the first time. It was something that I felt immediately after the race, and I've mentioned it to a number of people. I feel that I've overcome a psychological barrier. I've won my first Grand Prix, and to do so, early in one's Formula 1 career, is a tremendous boost in that it instils so much self-confidence.

It's good to win, but what is equally important - and it seems crazy to say so - is that I now know that I can win another day. Beforehand, I would weigh up the pros and cons, tello myself that I had all the right equipment and the right attitude, but having never climbed the step to the highest level of the rostrum, I was only able to say that I could win. Now I know that I can win. It used to be supposition. Now it's a certainty.

That means quite a lot. I didn't lack self-confidence, I can assure you. But now I know that when I'm eighth or tenth on the grid, I have the potential and ability to wing Grand Prix.

I'm not going to go through the race in detail, I'm sure that's chronicled elsewhere in these pages. But I'd like to point out a number of firsts to you. It was the first time I'd driven French car in the French Grand Prix; the first time that I'd raced a Formula I car at Dijon; and the first time I'd felt so much under pressure and so nervous, because this race was really important to us. In spite of all these firsts, I'm pleased with the way I reacted psychologically, because I won.

So now I feel that my career has advanced a stage further. I feel that I've accomplished something different, and I feel relieved that there's no longer the nagging doubt as to whether I could win.

I've only spoken about me winning, what egotism! Of course, the whole team won, and the personnel have now regained their self-confidence. We had a good meal together in Dijon on the Sunday night. It wasn't a wild, riproaring affair because I think we were all rather tired, but it was just a pleasant, quiet evening.

You may not know this, but my wife is expecting a child, and various wags have suggested that it might be called Victoria, but as it's going to be a boy, I don't think we'll bother with that name... I felt rather guilty that it was rather a long time after the race before I could phone my wife at Saint-Chamond. You know, in her condition, I shouldn't really excite her by winning races and that sort of thing. She's meant to remain calm and quiet, so it wasn't very thoughtful of me as a family man to win the French Grand Prix! I'll have to remember that at Silverstone. Roll on September when I can win without upsetting her! □

OK, AYJAY?

Alan Jones

Although I've never been in a concentration camp, I have a strong feeling that anyone who has ever visited one would have found a similar atmosphere at Dijon over the weekend of the French Grand Prix. The facilities are virtually nil and there is only one road in and out of the circuit, most of which was being used as a free car park anyway by the huge crowd of fans who inexplicably flocked into the place to watch the race.

Everywhere you looked, there were hired security guards with alsatian dogs. The guards themselves looked slightly less intelligent than their canine companions. Personally, I had no problems with them, at least not until the race was interrupted by rain. I had just got out of my car and found a reasonably dry place in which to relax when one of the dogs jumped up and snapped at me. Maybe it had been reading some of the stuff they printed in the local papers about how anti-French I am.

However, I'm told that even the French people were less than thrilled with conditions at Dijon. I seem to remember Monsieur Balestre telling everyone two years ago that he would never allow the GP to return to Dijon. I hope he had plenty of time to reconsider his promises as he queued to get out of the bloody place afterwards.

The self-appointed hero of Dijon is a most objectionable gentleman who is described as the circuit manager. He refuses to let our sponsors use the helicopter which they had organised in order to avoid the traffic. He seems to enjoy a punch-up, too, in fact I heard that his personal welcome to one of his important visitor's catering staff ended in a brawl that cost an Englishman six stitches.

Then there was the weather. There was rain and cold winds throughout practice, but even that did not deter the crowds. And when the sun came out on race morning, several million flies joined the spectators, attracted no doubt by the unmentionable consequences of too many people and not enough loos.

In the end, the French showed that they had actually got one thing well organised. When the rain came down and stopped the race with just over 20 laps still to go, the Renault people must have felt that they were having half a dozen Christmases all in one day. They bolted on the qualifiers, cranked up the boost and walked off with a comeback win that seemed to be very popular with all the race fans who were still sober enough to enjoy it.

Don't get me wrong, though, I was just as pleased for Alain Prost as they were. If the conditions hadn't suddenly turned to Prost's advantage, Nelson Piquet would have taken a full nine points instead of four, and both Carlos Reutemann and I would have been feeling even sicker about the results. That's right, neither of us scored points at Dijon. Carlos had a fuel problem (exactly like the one that lost me the race at Monaco, I believe), while I had a bump with Mario Andretti which dropped me out of the standings almost immediately after the start of the first part.

I wouldn't have been anywhere near Mario if we hadn't had handling problems throughout the weekend. As you will know, we were back on Goodyear tyres for the first time since Kyalami, and the combination of lack of pre-race testing and the new tyres proved to be more than even Patrick Head could sort out in the time available. I don't regret for a moment, though, that we've changed tyres mid-season, because I know that it will pay off for us before the end of the year.

I can't leave you without recommending an excellent book which I have just finished reading. It's called "Driving Ambition," and it was written, with some between-rounds comments from Keith Botsford, by myself. For the time being, it's only available in English, though I'm sure that French publishers will soon be fighting among themselves for the rights...

Seriously, it's been interesting to get involved with Keith in the production of something as ambitious as a book. Readers of Grand Prix are already familiar with his style (I think the correct word is "incisive"), and he has helped me to delve into my past. There are, I suppose, always things which you leave out of books for the simple reason that you've forgotten them. In the case of my book, though, I found on re-reading it that there are possibly a few things that I should have left out!

It's exactly what I wrote and said, so I hope that those of you who come to Silverstone will want to buy it there. Silverstone? Yes, that's the next GP on the schedule, and I can tell you now that I'm looking to my "home" circuit to restore the pleasure for racing that, for me, took a severe blow in France last week. □

Cockpits

RENAULT ELF

Renault RE 33:
René Arnoux (F)
Renault RE 32:
Alain Prost (F)
Renault RE 31:
spare.

The Renault team had spent much time preparing for the French Grand Prix. The team had tested there frequently, which had led to a number of aerodynamic changes being made. Three RE 30s were taken to Dijon, including the car damaged at Monaco which had now been repaired. All three cars had modified side pods, particularly the interior wing profile with air funnelling along the rear part beside the gearbox, similar to that fitted to the Williams at the 1980 Argentina Grand Prix.

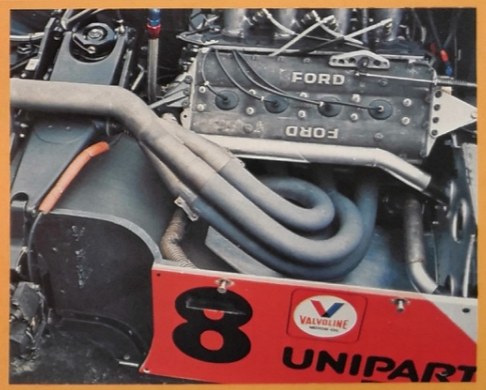
The air intakes to the engine were smaller and their interior profile had also been altered. Furthermore, the little flaps above the radiator intakes on the side pods had been taken off. The two race cars were fitted with new rear wings designed by Italian Enrico Benzing, although the spare car was still fitted with an older style wing.

The French team had also begun a development exercise on the engine. Between now and the end of the season, Renault's engine technicians will be testing electronic injection in order to try and reduce the turbo lag which is a greater problem than it is with the Ferraris. Arnoux had a number of clutch problems at the start of practice, but they were quickly repaired. Prost complained of mediocre road-holding and less boost pressure than on Arnoux's engin.

Arnoux quickly lost all advantage of starting from pole because of problems with the starting light system, and during the race, both drivers had gearbox problems. However, Prost's loss of fourth gear didn't stop him from catching Piquet at the end of the first race, and from Arnoux climbing up from tenth to fifth place before the rain fell. Prost leaped into the lead at the start of the second race, and thanks to his softer Michelin tyres and repaired gearbox, was able to maintain his lead just in front of Watson, easily eating up Piquet's first race time advantage. Although Reutemann finished ahead of Arnoux in the first race, the Argentine's misfiring engine lost him his place, and Arnoux finished fourth overall.

MARLBORO MCLAREN

Marlboro-Ford MP4/2:
John Watson (GB)
Marlboro-Ford MP4/1:
Andrea de Cesaris (I)



The McLaren International team's spare car made its first appearance at Dijon. It's a new chassis which is slightly modified in comparison to the preceding models, particularly in its construction. Furthermore, the new chassis is lighter than MP4/1, as is MP4/2. Even the suspension was slightly lighter than on the older car. Ron Dennis says that the car's development is now entering its most important stage, of which there are three sectors: weight, aerodynamics, and rigidity. Aerodynamic changes may well be seen at Silverstone, but certainly at Hockenheim. All the same, the MP4 showed at Dijon that it was already well suited to fast circuits. From the start of practice, Watson proved to be the fastest Cosworth-powered runner, and faster than the Goodyear-shod drivers. He set second fastest time. De Cesaris proved the MP4's potential by qualifying on the third row. The Italian made an excellent start but fell back and then had to pit for a suspension adjustment and new rear tyes. Watson was just starting to challenge Prost - as both of them caught Piquet - when it began raining. He had even overtaken the Renault driver when the race was stopped. He was just as menacing during the second race, again overtaking the Renault briefly, but finished an excellent second overall.

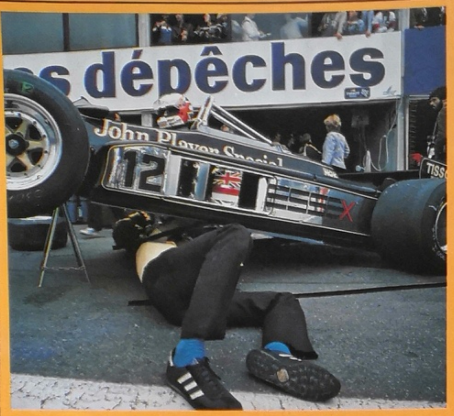
PARMALAT BRABHAM

Brabham-Ford BT 49/11:
Nelson Piquet (BR)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/12:
Hector Rebaque (MEX)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/09:
spare.

After Jarama, Gordon Murray found out what was upsetting the Brabham's handling: a link had been fouling the rising-rate suspension travel, Apart from freeing the suspension from this hindrance, there were no great innovations on the Brabhams. However, the suspension geometry had had to be changed to take Goodyear's cross-ply tyres instead of Michelin's radials, the latter requiring more camber. Before leaving for France, Piquet had tested Goodyears at Silverstone.

During practice, Piquet suffered some gearbox trouble on his race car. He was also testing carbon fibre brakes on the spare car, and spent some time making comparative tests, but settled on racing his usual car. Rebaque kept changing side pods and had some clutch trouble. In the first race, Piquet made an excellent start and pulled away easily, but then struck tyre trouble, and began to fall back. But a bad start in the second race resulted in him being stuck behind Pironi and he lost all the advantage of winning the first race, ending up third overall. Rebaque drove an excellent first race up to sixth, but when Reutemann pushed past him on the first lap of the second race, he spun, never made up enough ground and finished eleventh overall.

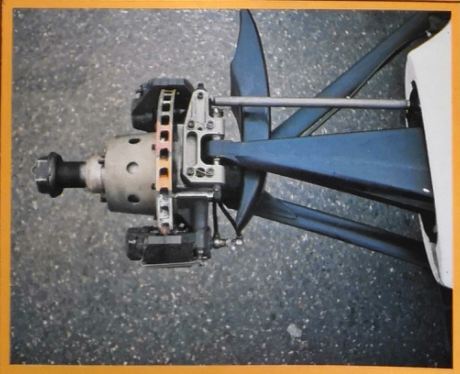
Cockpits



JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS

Lotus-Ford 87/2:
Elio de Angelis (I)
Lotus-Ford 87/1:
Nigel Mansell (GB)
Lotus-Ford 81/2:
spare.

Lotus had been unable to build wider side pods for the 87s, so Colin Chapman had modified the narrow versions by altering the rear end of the pods and extending the skirts back to the rear wheels. But still the two drivers complained of lack of downforce. The spare 81 was pressed into service when de Angelis and Mansell both broke engines. For the race, de Angelis's car was fitted with small front and rear wings. What the Italian lost in the corners, he gained on the straight, but for the second part of the race, normal wings were fitted. Neither driver was particularly competitive, nor uncompetitive, but once again, they both finished, with de Angelis just ahead of Mansell and taking the final point in the championship. It's probably the last time the Lotus 87 will be seen in this configuration.



ENSIGN

Ensign-Ford MN 180 B/15:
Eliseo Salazar (RCH)

The Ensign team used virtually every make of tyre available at one stage or another, including old Goodyear slicks, Michelin wets ad then Avon slicks. However, the car had been set up for the cross-ply Avons which necessitated new suspension geometry. There were bigger uprights, but new wheels meant that the track and wheelbase were unaltered. The rear suspension broke after seven laps of the race, putting the Chilean out of the French Grand Prix.

TAG WILLIAMS

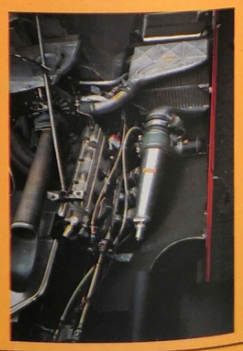
Williams-Ford FW 07B/15:
Alan Jones (AUS)
Williams-Ford FW 07B/12:
Carlos Reutemann (RA)
Williams-Ford FW 07B/13:
spare.

The Williams team also had modified side pods on the FW07s. The interior profile extended underneath the gearbox as far as the driveshafts. The suspension geometry had to be altered in order to take Goodyear tyres, but apparently with less success than on the Brabhams. At the start of practice, Jones tried 15 inch diameter wheels, but soon reverted to the originals, only to have the 15 inch versions fitted just before the race. But the two drivers complained of poor handling, and started on the fourth row (Reutemann) and fifth row (Jones). Things weren't much better during the race. Jones tangled with Andretti on the first lap and pitted to have a steering arm changed, and later stopped twice for new tyres. In the end, he finished 17th and last. Reutemann was never in touch with leaders but tussled with Arnoux in the first race and finished fourth. On the first lap of the second race, he hit both Laffite and Rebaque, and then slipped back with a bad misfire, ending up tenth overall.

FERRARI SEFAC

Ferrari 126 C/056:
Gilles Villeneuve (CDN)
Ferrari 126 C/053:
Didier Pironi (F)
Ferrari 126 C/050:
spare.

Despite a number of minor modifications to the Ferraris, they were still in handling trouble. The side pods were in two parts this time, with a little hatch in them to adjust the skirt height. The ride height could be either operated manually by the driver, or hydraulically.
The spare car was fitted with entirely new suspension. The normal castings were replaced by small tubular frameworks. The geometry of the lower arms was completely changed, and the spring/shock absorbers were inclined more than on the normal version. Villeneuve crashed at Pouas during practice and had to take over the spare before having trouble with the side pod mountings. Pironi was in greater trouble with his tyres going off even at relatively low speed.
Villeneuve's race car was ready for the race, but his problem was still lack of grip. All the same, he got up to sixth place - with a queue of five cars behind him - before he retired with fuel feed trouble. Pironi was further back in the first race, but maintained a strong fourth place in the second part in front of Piquet, finishing fifth overall.



TALBOT GITANES

Ligier-Matra JS 17/04:
Jacques Laffite (F)
Ligier-Matra JS 17/03:
Patrick Tambay (F)
Ligier-Matra JS 17/02:
spare.

Guy Ligier's team, like Renault, had spent some time concentrating on the French Grand Prix. Laffite had tested a front track that was 10 centimeters narrower, and this gave an extra five miles an hour down the straight. During official practice, Laffite tried both narrow and normal track on his car, and finally the narrow track was fitted to both race cars. As in Spain, the rev limit was set at 12.800 rpm. However, team manager Gérard Ducarouge was worried that this would mean that the fuel consumption would be too high for the cars' fuel capacity. During practice, the skirt mountings of the car gave trouble and both cars lacked grip. Laffite set a good sixth fastest time, while new recruit Patrick Tambay was on the eighth row for his first race with the team. In the race, Tambay stopped to have his rear suspension checked, and finally retired on the 50th lap with a seized wheel bearing. Laffite was heading for a top six placing, but had to let Rebaque by in the first race. In the second, he tangled with Reutemann at the first corner and went no further.

FITTIPALDI

Fittipaldi-Ford F8 C/3:
Keke Rosberg (SF)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8 C/4:
Chico Serra (BR)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8 C/2:
spare.

After Spain, the team discovered why the hydropneumatic suspension system had failed to work: the cylinder vibrated when the car was in motion, and all the oil escaped. This was remedied for Dijon, but new side pods were fitted to the cars in France, and this had caused the team to alter the rear suspension mounting points. The upper arm was fitted to the upright and the gearbox, in order to improve air flow. Serra managed to qualify, but crashed during the Sunday morning warm-up and was unable to start the race. Rosberg had trouble in practice and was delayed when his gearbox broke. He retired on the 12th lap with handling trouble.

MARCH GRAND PRIX

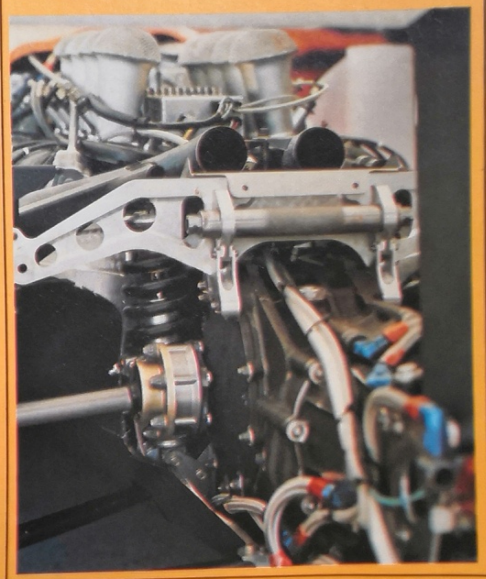
March-Ford 811/04:
Derek Daly (IRL)
March-Ford 811/05:
spare.

The Guinness Rizla March was slightly altered in order to take Avon's tyres, but it should be considerably changed for Silverstone. Only the current chassis will remain, for Gordon Coppuck and Adrian Reynard have designed new bodywork and suspension for their home Grand Prix. Daly was always around the 20th mark in practice. He started from that place on the grid, only to pit with a jammed throttle, as in Spain. The engine seizerl in the second race.

RAGNO BETA ARROWS

Arrows-Ford A3/5:
Riccardo Patrese (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/6:
Siegfried Stohr (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/2:
spare.

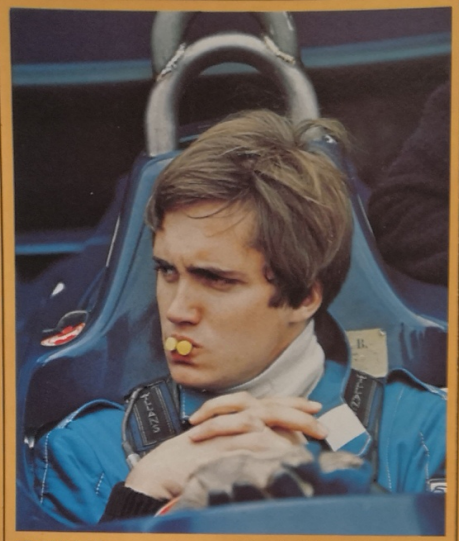
The new rear end that the team expected to be ready for Dijon was indeed fitted to Patrese's car. The main aim of this was to improve air flow. Arrows had built a new gearbox casing around Hewland internals which is 10 centimeters narrower than the previous model. The gearbox linkage is mounted high up in order to leave the lower part uncluttered, and new uprights are flatter. Furthermore, the camber had been altered in order to improve the car in fast corners, to the detriment of handling in slow corners. Even though this new suspension had never been tried before Dijon, Patrese was quite happy with it. Stohr was equally untroubled, but the tyre situation clearly handicapped the team, with not enough tyres to go round. Stohr was unable to qualify, and Patrese was further back on the grid than normal, and didn't feature in the race. His gamble on wet tyres in the second session failed, and he finished 14th.



DENIM OSELLA

Osella-Ford A1/03:
Beppe Gabbiani (I)
Osella-Ford A1/04:
spare.

No Francia, no ghinzani, no Guerra, so just one Osella ran at Dijon. This was fitted with the increasingly popular suspension system operated by the driver. New side pods meant that the aerodynamic pressure was further back than previously, but it meant that the car had too much downforce. Gabbiani broke one engine which was still being changed when the final official session started on Saturday afternoon. But the new engine broke too, and Gabbiani failed to qualify.



TYRRELL

Tyrrell-Ford 010/3-5:
Eddie Cheever (USA)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/1:
Michèle Alboreto (I)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/2:
spare.

The Tyrrell team was hoping that it would be the final time that the 010s would run. The new car is probably ready by the time you read this, and Eddie Cheever was expecting to test it at Donington before the British GP. It should be very rigid, with a larger and higher central section to the monocoque than on the present car. In spite of getting the rough end of the Michelin deal, and a broken engine, Alboreto managed to qualify, but both he and Cheever were towards the back end of the grid. Both cars finished, but well back.

THEODORE RACING

Theodore-Ford TY 01/2:
Marc Surer (CH)
Theodore-Ford TY 01/_:
spare.

The greatest change in the Theodore team was that Marc Surer had replaced Patrick Tambay. Both cars were fitted with variable ride height suspension, and after using Michelin wets during the first session, the suspension was adjusted to take Avons. Like the other Avon runners, Surer qualified and drove an excellent race in spite of gearbox trouble. New rear bodywork should be fitted to the car at Silverstone.

AUTODELTA ALFA ROMEO

Alfa Romeo 179 B/03:
Mario Andretti (USA)
Alfa Romeo 179 B/06:
Bruno Giacomelli (I)
Alfa Romeo 179 B/02:
spare.

Three of last year's cars were taken to Dijon, while this year's unpopular models are being completely rebuilt. However, there should be considerable aerodynamic changes to the cars at Silverstone. The spare car was in different aerodynamic configuration to the others, and when Andretti tried it, he found it to be better, so the two race cars were changed and the spare was fitted with the original bodywork because there weren't enough spares. Andretti also tried a large front wing. Both drivers said that their tyres were going off, even though the competition weren't suffering the same problems. The cars started on the fifth and sixth rows but were rarely in the top ten. However, Andretti finished seventh in the second part, while Giacomelli lost the gamble of starting on rain tyres like Patrese.

ATS WHEELS

ATS-Ford HJS/1:
Slim Borgudd (S)
ATS-Ford D4/05:
spare.

As in Spain, Borgudd missed the first practice session, but this time because team patron Schmid didn't want to buy any rain tyres. There were no changes on the car and Borgudd failed to qualify. A new team manager may well be hired soon..

CANDY TOLEMAN

Toleman-Hart TG 181/2:
Brian Henton (GB)
Toleman-Hart TG 181/3:
Derek Warwick (GB)

The Tolemans came closer to qualifying than ever at Dijon, despite a host of problems. Henton suffered from a badly upset stomach on the Friday and missed the first session, and Warwick went off the road on Saturday morning and missed the afternoon session. The turbos gave problems, and both cars ended up with the original model. But they're hoping for better on the home track in England, and new Bayer-built heat exchangers should be fitted to the Hart engines by Hockenheim.

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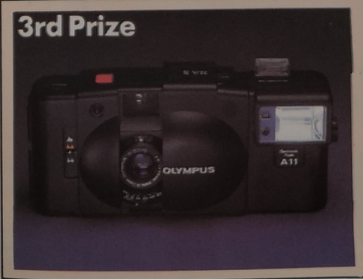

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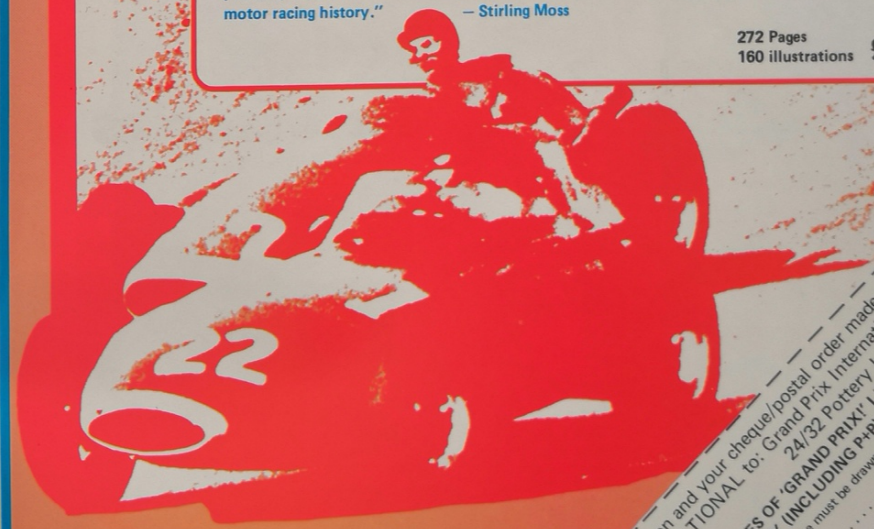

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